

CORRECT BELIEF

A Pre-Condition For

SALVATION

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***“Whoever does right - whether male or female
while he is a believer, We will surely cause
him to live a good life, and We will surely give
them their reward [in the Hereafter] according
to the best of what they used to do.”***

(Qur'an 16:97)

introduction

Praise be to Allah, ⁽¹⁾ we seek His help and His guidance and we ask His forgiveness and repent before Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own souls and from the evil of our deeds. Whom Allah guides shall not go astray, and whom He permits to stray shall not find guidance.

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, alone. He has no partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger. He conveyed the Message and brought security and advised his nation, and he struggled truly in the path of Allah as all should struggle until the time that Allah brought him what must surely come to us all. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and upon his family and his companions and upon all that follow his guidance and his *Sunnah* (way or methodology) and walk in his footsteps until the Day of Judgement.
Oh Allah, be pleased with them, and with us together with them, by Your mercy. You are the Supremely Merciful.

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions and whoever follows their guidance until the Day of Resurrection.

When the revelation was received by the first Muslims it came to them in a pure and unblemished form, and by the doctrines and beliefs which they received, they were raised up among men in honor and respect.

But later, with the passing of the years, new ideas and new practices began to attach themselves to the pure faith of the Revelation, undermining the understanding and the beliefs of the Muslims, until they began to go to extremes in religion. Novel and strange ideas and additions in religion came to take the place of the doctrines and the methodologies of Islam until they caused a major retreat in the Muslim's ideologies and beliefs, and played a major role in their ignorance and backwardness.

⁽¹⁾ - The name of God is Allah. That is what the Christians use in the Arabic translation of The Bible. Allah is a specific name. It is not a common noun.

This nation will not awaken from its backsliding, and will not emerge from insignificance, until it returns to the first sources, and receives its faith through the light of the Qur'an, and the (correct reports of) the *Sunnah* (way) of the Prophet. There is no need of the empty words of philosophers and their defiant philosophy which led people astray and had the worst impact in destroying religion and distorting the teachings of the messengers.

When the Muslims turned to the ancient philosophical traditions of Greek polytheism they exposed themselves to one of the most powerful of all poisons of the heart.

Ibn Khaldoun mentioned that the Muslims discovered many philosophic religious books that were found when they conquered Persia. Sa'ad b. Abi Waqqas wrote to Omar b. al-Khattab to ask his permission to bring some of these books back with him. Omar wrote to him telling him to throw them into the sea. "If these books contain guidance, then Allah has already sufficed us, but if they contain error then Allah has delivered us from it. Throw them into the sea—or burn them." Then they threw them into the water, and by that, the science of Persia was prevented from reaching the hands of the Muslims."⁽²⁾

This is how protective they were of the religion of Allah, and this is how every Muslim should act to protect it from the encroachment of the ideas of those who hope to cause trouble and confusion, and from the perversions of those who would destroy the faith of others if they could. There is no compromise in Allah's religion.

This nation must totally purify its monotheist beliefs from the distortion and the accretions of medieval philosophy which has been mixed with Islam.

Imam Malik rightly pointed out that "Nothing reforms the last of this nation except what has reformed the first of them."⁽³⁾

⁽²⁾ Ibn Khaldoun, *al-Muqaddima*, 480.

⁽³⁾ Transmitted by Ibn Al-Majshoon from Malik. (See *Al-Itisaam* 2:49).

My work in this book

Throughout this book, I had attempted to present a clear and concise description of Islamic doctrines which are free of long digressions and pedantry. Based on authentic sources: The Qur'an and the authentic *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

I had tried to cover all major areas of Islamic belief. This is not a book on philosophy and it is not intended to be a detailed discussion of any of the more esoteric areas of religious science or divinity. While such books have their place, they do not generally help ordinary Muslims to understand the clear sources of Islamic doctrines.

As for the translation of the Qur'anic verses, I had started to use Abdallah Yusuf Ali's translation, then Arbery's translation, then Pickthall's translation. Finally, I received the latest of the Qur'anic translations written by Sahih International, published by (Abul-Qasim) and I found it the best one among the current translations. But I found the necessity in some cases to modify the translated verses.

As for the Hadith, I do not remember coating any incorrect narration. Rather, I was strictly reluctant to cite any incorrect Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ.

I hope that Allah will accept this as a deed done purely for His pleasure and that He will cause it to be beneficial to the Muslims and that He will always guide us in purifying our intentions, that whatever we do should be for His pleasure alone. Surely He is the All-Seeing, the All-Knowing.

Pure Faith leads to salvation

Everyone has a belief, but is it the true belief that His Lord wants him to believe?
Tell me not "You believe" but tell me, what is your belief?
If your belief is pure from polytheism and innovation, then you'll be saved.

But if your belief is inconsistent with the belief of Abraham, Noah, Moses...ETC, then you will not be saved. For a false belief does not lead to Paradise but to perish. Abraham worshiped One God who has no son. He worshiped Him directly without mediators between.

Don't say to me, 'I was brought up on this faith with my family, so I must maintain it till I die'. But let me remind you that Abraham was brought up in a pagan family, nevertheless, he did not say, 'since my family are pagans I have to be like them.' But he criticized their beliefs and destroyed their Idols.

Why we worship God?

We worship God because we need His salvation, His reward, and because we fear His Hell and punishment.

Can anyone else create these things other than the Creator? How come that people seek salvation from those who are not creators.

If God does not offer me these three things then this would be a proof that he is the wrong god, and therefore there is no need to worship him.

Since Allah is My Only Creator, then He must be to me My Only Savior of whom I supplicate, pray to Him for my salvation in this world and the one to come.

Jesus (Peace be with him) worshiped God, hoping His mercy, fearing His punishment.

All the Prophets used to be the way Allah described them:
“They used to hasten to good deeds, and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive.”

(21:90)

True Faith and False Religion

There are many religions in the world, each of which has its followers. Some of them account for hundreds of millions of people, but numbers cannot be an indication of truth. There are millions of Buddhists in the world, but it is an idolatrous religion.

Likewise, the Hindus number in millions, but they too are idolaters. Many of the world's religions have similarities .

There are also differences between them. They all agree that Allah created the heavens and the earth, that He provides for His creatures and actively directs events in the world. But you can realize the difference when you observe the details of each one's faith, and the ways it manifests itself.

There are monotheists who only worship Allah and call upon none but Him, not upon idols, nor false gods, nor saints. And there are polytheists who believe in Allah but fail to worship Him alone purely, without mixing Him up with invented deities and idols.

Allah said,

“And most of them believe not in Allah except while they associate others (with Him).” (12:106)

There is no doubt that among the world's religions there is one that is acceptable to Allah for His worshippers, a religion other than which He will not accept, and the followers of which alone will find their good works and worship accepted through this religion that He has accepted. Allah guides whomever He pleases to His religion from among those whom He knows to be good, and whomever He pleases He allows to become overcome by their own pride. Allah said,

“I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant on the earth without right; and if they should see every sign, they will not believe in it.” (7:146)

Their turning away is the desire they have for living eternally in this world, while turning themselves away from the Hereafter.

The world is another kind of religion around which most people adhere themselves to. They may relate themselves traditionally to different religions, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism...etc. They all have one worldly concern to live for; they are completely absorbed in the affairs of the world and they forget the next world, and do nothing to prepare themselves for it, nor are they concerned with searching out the truth of religion. Allah said,

“Every soul will be tasting death. And you will be paid your reward only on the Day of Resurrection. So, he who is drawn away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, has indeed succeeded. for the life of this world is nothing but the enjoyment of delusion.” (3:185)

Every name of religion is derived from the names for some created beings, except for Islam.

Christians have named their faith after Jesus Christ, but was Christ Christian? Of course not. He was a follower of the Torah, revealed to Moses.

Judaism is derived from the name of Judah, but what was Judah's faith? In another word, was Judah a Jew? Thus, we can see the birth of new religions that occurred at the same time as the birth of Judah and Christ.

The Buddhists take their name from Buddha, but was Buddha a Buddhist? What was the name of the true religion during the life time of Buddha?

We also ask, what was the name of the religion at the time of Abraham? ⁽⁴⁾ Though he was the father of the prophets, was he a

⁽⁴⁾ It is noteworthy to know that the names of the prophets in Christianity changes from language to another, if you speak English you say Jesus but if you speak Spanish you say Khosies like wise Peter to Patros...Etc. I decided to mention the names of the prophets according to English language, yet I did not do the same concerning the name of Allah. Christians think that the word God is a proper noun while it's a common noun. The word God means One who people worship, while Allah refers to the name that should only be worship. If we fail to know the name of the true God then how far are we from guidance.

Jew or a Christian? Not likely, since both Judah and Christ were his descendants and neither the Torah nor the Gospels were revealed until after he had gone.

If we were to say that either of these two religions, Judaism and Christianity, is the true faith, then what of those who died before the coming of the Messiah and who never knew about Christianity? What of those who died before Judah and who never knew Judaism? The answer to these incomprehensible questions is that we can be certain that all the prophets submitted in humility to the command of Allah. This is what the Arabs call Islam. They submitted and humbled themselves before Allah. This is the meaning of "Islam."

In this way we can know the religion of all the prophets through which they were brothers. It is the religion of Islam, Submission to Allah.

Islam does not derive its name from the name of any of Allah's creatures. It is not a mere name, but it is an abstract noun, a kind of description of behavior.

Whoever behaves in a certain way can be described as having this quality of "Islam." Whoever submits himself totally to the will of Allah, and abides by the limits which Allah has set, and who proclaims his unconditional obedience to Allah, who allies himself completely to Allah, he is a Muslim.

Allah does not name His religion after any person, nor is it dependent on the birth of any person, because the religion of Allah is the religion of all humanity from Adam to the last believer who will walk on the earth.

Allah had commanded that all of creation submit to Him, saying,

"And turn to your Lord and surrender to Him, before the punishment comes upon you suddenly, then you will not be helped." (39:54)

And He said,

"And who is there that has a fairer religion than he who submits his will to Allah, being a good-doer, and who

follows the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith?”

(4:125)

And He said,

“Do they seek something different than the religion of Allah, when whoever is in the heavens and the earth submits to Him, willingly, or unwillingly, and to Him will be their return.” (3:83)

All the prophets submitted humbly to the command of Allah, and they were the first of their peoples to do so. This is why they are called “Muslims” in the Qur’an:

“Surely We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light; the prophets who submitted [to Allah] judge by it for the Jews.” (5:44)

And again,

“Abraham was neither a Jew, nor a Christian; but was inclining toward truth, a submissive to Allah (Muslim) and he was never of the polytheists.” (3:67)

The quality that is shared by all of the prophets is their submission to Allah. They were the humblest of all people before Allah, submitting to His command in all things. They were all brothers in a single faith. They committed themselves to this, to submission and to humility before Allah. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said, “The prophets are paternal brothers, their mothers are many, but their faith is one.”⁽⁵⁾

Thus on the basis of that we conclude this:

How distant from the religion of the prophets is he who calls himself a Muslim but does not submit to Allah and does not pray to Him. Could someone be a Muslim, submitting to Allah, yet not pray and not pay *zakat* and not fast in *Ramadan* and not perform the Pilgrimage? Could he be a Muslim, submitting to Allah, and not hesitating to commit any forbidden act from fornication to drunkenness?

If Satan was ordered to prostrate to Adam but he refused to do so and thus he became the worst of creation, what then of someone

⁽⁵⁾ Al-Bukhari (3442) and Muslim (2365).

who is commanded to prostrate himself to Allah, not to Adam, but refuses to do so out of pride?

The Proliferation of Religions

If the prophets all followed the same religion, why are there so many today, and who has invented all these religions?

Muslims believe that the prophets all conveyed the message of Allah to their peoples in the best possible way. But after them people started to disagree among themselves. They distorted the teachings of the prophets and the religion of Allah was splintered into different faiths. They adopted names to distinguish themselves, taken from the names of their prophets, and then claimed that they were the custodians of the true faith of the prophets. Allah said,

“Mankind were of one nation [i.e one religion] then Allah sent the prophets as bringers of good tidings and as warners, and sent down with them the Book with truth to judge between people concerning that in which they differed. And none differed over it except those who were given it – after the clear proofs came to them out of jealous animosity among themselves- then Allah guided those who believed to the truth concerning that over which they differed for, by His permission. For Allah guides whom He pleases to a straight path.” (2:213)

Allah also cautioned us not to follow their ways,
“And be not of the polytheists. Those who have divided their religion and become sects, every faction is content with the sect it has.” (30:31-32)

The prophets have no responsibility for the chaos of beliefs that followed after them. Jesus did not tell anyone to call himself a Christian, rather his own followers told him,

“We believed in Allah and bear witness that we are Muslims [submissive].” (3:52)

Judah did not tell anyone to call himself a Jew. Moses said to
his people,
***“O people, if you have believed in Allah, then rely on Him
if you are Muslims [submissive].”*** (10:84)

The Christians began to argue with the Jews about Abraham.
One claimed he was a Christian and another claimed he was a Jew.
Allah replied saying,

***“Abraham was neither a Jew, nor a Christian; but was
inclining toward truth, a submissive to Allah (Muslim)
and he was never of the polytheists.”*** (3:67)

Since Allah is One, then the Religion is One

All religions call for chastity and modesty. « Do not cheat, do not lie, do not kill... etc.» .

But which else other than the religion of Islam calls for the worship of the One God alone, declaring that no one deserves to be worshipped except the One Creator, rejecting any form of worship whether in prostration or supplication to anyone other than Allah?

This is the only gate today of entering Islam, and without this testimony, one can never be a Muslim. And it will be the condition tomorrow to enter Heaven, no one among those who link parts to Allah, and claim to be partners, sons, or mediators will ever enter Heaven.

For it is the place worthy to those who purely worshipped Allah alone as Abraham and the other prophets did. Is not this a sign that Islam is the true religion of Allah.

The Qur'an calls all humanity to a single faith, Islam. This is the religion of the prophets. Allah says, "***Surely religion to Allah is Islam.***" (3:19)

And stressed that this is the religion that He has chosen for His servants,

"Today I have perfected for you your religion, and completed My favor upon you, and approved for you Islam as religion." (5:3)

Allah will accept no other faith than this. This religion is the only thing that links a human being with his Lord. Through it a person's prayers, his good deeds and his charitable works are validated. Whoever worships Allah through some other faith will see his deeds rejected. Never will these bring him nearer to Allah

Who said,

"Whosoever desires other than Islam as religion – never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter will be among the losers" (3:85).

The Way to Achieve Happiness

Every individual is inquisitive by nature about anything that brings him happiness; all are striving to achieve happiness with all of their efforts.

Some of them strive to seek a temporary happiness in this world, thinking that this is the whole happiness. But this happiness will be succeeded by pain and sorrow on the Day of resurrection.

These individuals will know that they were striving to achieve misery and that they were impatient to obey Allah to win a greater and perpetual happiness tomorrow.

What they had is joy followed by confusion and concern and expectations of God's punishment, which uses the same devil that they obeyed by day to scare them at night.

This is the fact: anyone who does not join the straight path and surrender to the true religion of his Lord is unhappy. ***But most people are good actors.*** They pretend to be happy while their hearts shed tears for the darkness that encircles them.

The joy of the body leaves a negative impact on the heart, and the sins of the body injure the heart. No one who sins is actually happy when he feels the suffering of the heart, but most sinners do not tell what occurs in their hearts. They do not want to admit that despite all they do they are not happy.

The sign of the real happiness is to feel peace of mind, calmness, tranquility and security. Others know that to obey Allah, to follow His religion, and to fix themselves to faith in Him is the utmost happiness, to which nothing can be compared to it.

When this happiness penetrates the heart of the believing servant of Allah, he does in fact live in the world as if he were in Paradise. These are the people who find true happiness in this world.

What kind of happiness could be greater than that of someone who humbles himself to Allah, worships Him and strives

for His pleasure and for success on the Day of Resurrection, strives for Paradise and for deliverance from Hellfire? Happiness is not sought through ephemeral money or through a perishing life.

The believer lives with such sweetness in his heart that if the masters of the earth knew of it, they would fight him to death to take it away from him.

Allah says,

“Whoever does right - whether male or female – while he is a believer, We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.”

(16:97)

“And whoever does righteous deeds - whether male or female – while being a believer, those will enter Paradise and will not be wronged a bit.” (4:124)

Real happiness fills the heart and the body with happiness that can only be sought by the submission and obedience to Allah, while money fills the body only.

This is the real happiness: a good life of the heart and the body today, and a better and lasting one tomorrow in the next life.

One should ask why we hear about many cases of suicide among rich people. Sweden and Japan – two rich countries – have the highest rate of suicide.

People will not be happy until they know why they were created, and then where they are going after they die.

We know much about Mars, the moon, the stars, and the galaxies, thanks to this century of knowledge. But how much do we know about ourselves? We only know but a little.

It is good that we know much about Mars, but it is not fair that we know about Mars and the moon more than we know about ourselves. For if we do not know why we were created we will not know why we die, and then all other knowledge is vain and we are lost.

Food for the Body and Food for the Soul

People need to eat every day to supply their bodies with energy and to keep themselves healthy. If they stop eating for any length of time, disease will sneak them up on them and overtake them, perhaps even killing them. But people also need food of another kind, food for the spirit that supports the heart so that it remains as healthy as the body.

It is unfortunate that while people are careful never to forget to feed their bodies, they do not show the same concern for the health and safety of their souls and of their hearts. The heart's need of food is the same as the need of the body.

The diseases of the body and the debilitating effects they have are not more dangerous than the diseases of the heart, such as pride, arrogance, envy, hypocrisy and the stony hardening of the heart, that all come from spiritual starvation. The worst and greatest disease among these is the disease of *shirk*⁽⁶⁾, when the heart clings to creatures, making them equal to Allah.

If a person feels that his body is ill, he will rush to the hospital, fearing for his health and for his life. But he does not rush to cure and maintain his heart from more dangerous diseases such as doubt, jealousy, hypocrisy, arrogance and a clinging dependence upon the world. It is as if the danger of heart disease is limited to the material side only.

Shirk (worshipping other than God) is The greatest killer disease of the heart. When one associates something else with Allah, the result is the greatest loss of this life and the next one.

⁽⁶⁾ *Shirk* means: Setting up partners with Allah, or supplicating others with Allah, claiming that these are mediators who draw us nearer to Him, or giving love, fear, hope, submission, obedience to others equal to that should be given to Allah.

The cure for this disease is to worship Allah alone sincerely,
and to link your heart to Him both inwardly and outwardly.
It is surprising after all that *tawhid* (monotheism) lies at the
very heart of Islam and its banner and is the first call to mankind.

There is no god but Allah
LA ILAHA ILLALLAH ⁽⁷⁾

This is the word of truth, which is:

- The key to Islam in life, and the key to Paradise in the next life.
- The best word that the tongue of man moves by and the best of what all the prophets had said.
- The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The finest word that I and the prophets before me have ever said, is ***LA ILAHA ILLALLAH*** ‘There is no god but Allah.’”⁽⁸⁾
- It is the finest word that the servant of Allah finishes his speech with at his death.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whose last word was ‘***LA ILAHA ILLALLAH*** There is no god but Allah,’ shall enter Paradise.”⁽⁹⁾

Islam’s emphasis on *tawhid* is not restricted only to the point of acknowledging that Allah is the One Creator of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, but *tawhid* also means to address oneself in his worship to Allah alone, his prayers, his fasting, and his charity are directed at none other than Him.

But not depending upon Allah, not applying His Law, fearing and loving others – like or more, auguring bad omen in numbers, days, and creatures, are all signs that *shirk* is rooted in such a heart that carries these diseases and a proof of the lack of monotheism, even if this person says, “There is no god but Allah.” For these diseases contradict the necessary meaning and condition of this testimony.

⁽⁷⁾ There no one worthy of worship but Allah

⁽⁸⁾ Tirmidhi, (3579).

⁽⁹⁾ Abu Daud, (3116); al-Hakim 1/351.

However, Islam warns us about the hidden (unclear) *shirk* that may not be known even to the person who usually avoids clear *shirk*. We have been warned about *ria'a* (*showing off*), whether during performing prayer or other time.

During prayer, a person may be praying and suddenly notice that someone sees him, and so he makes a special effort to humble himself in his prayer since his friend or his brother may be watching. It was for this reason that we have been advised to conceal charity, and to conceal it to the extent that the left hand does not know what the right hand has spent. We should conceal this from the eyes of others.

For Allah does not accept any of the deeds except those which have been done entirely for His sake. Thus, Islam strips away all forms of *shirk*, lest our deeds contradict this testimony.

O People, Worship Your Lord

Did you ever think about the secret behind our existence?
Did you ever wonder where we came from and why Allah
created us?
Did you ever wonder why we have been placed on this earth?
Did you ever wonder why we die, where will we be taken after
death? What will become of us in the end?
Did you ever ask yourself why Allah placed the earth and all
that is in it in the grasp of mankind? Why were we given dominion
over the mountains and the seas? Why was the night created, and
the day? Why was the sun created, and the moon? Just as Allah
says,

*“It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth,
and sent down water from the sky, so produced thereby
fruits as provision for you, and subjected for you ships to
sail through the sea by His command, and subjected
rivers for you, and subjected the sun and moon that run
regularly for you, and subjected for you night and the
day. And He gave you of all that you asked of Him. And if
you count the grace of Allah you will not enumerate
them.” (14:32-34)*

What man supposed to be doing during his life, and what did he
take with him when he left the world unwillingly?
Is there no reason for all of this? Or is there none; but we are
living in the world just as the cattle lives, eating and drinking, and
enjoying ourselves and then die?
A poet once said,
“I came, I do not know where I came from, but I came.
And I saw a way before me, so I walked.
And I will still be walking whether I desire it or not.
How did I come? How did I see my way?
I do not know. I do not know.... I do not know....”

Did Allah create us merely for eating and reproducing, or is
there a higher reason than that of which most people do not

realize? Most people do not torment themselves by seeking the answers to these questions, because most of them are totally taken up with the concerns of the world. They do not often think about the day when their lives will end.

Allah has not cast mankind adrift in a sea of confusion without giving him clear reasons for his existence on earth. Allah said,

“Did you think that We created you for none reason, and that you would not be returned to Us?” (23:115)

And He did not neglect us: ***“Does man think that he will be left neglected?”*** (75:36)

Rather, Allah sent Books and messengers and set the scales of justice among mankind as a test to them to worship Him according to His command and to His Law.

“Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe”, and that they will not be tried? But We have tested those before them, for surely Allah will make evident those who are truthful from those who are liars. ”

(29:2-3)

This house (of this life) is a house of trial, a house of work, which we will soon leave to a house of either reward or punishment, a house where we will reap what we have sown in this world.

“On that Day mankind will be separated into groups to be shown their [recorded] deeds.

Then, whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom’s weight of bad will see it.”

(99:6-8)

This is why it has been said that the world is a farm of the hereafter. Then people will be at that time divided into two groups, one happy in Paradise, and another despairing in Hell.

The sublime reason why Allah has created us is simply to worship Him alone. Allah said,

“I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.

***I do no need from them any provision, nor want them to feed Me.
Indeed, it is Allah Who is the provider, the possessor of firm strength. ” (51:56-58)***

Since this is the first and most essential reason why we are created, then one must maintain it more than anything else. There is but one sin that is unforgivable in Islam, and that is *Shirk*. Allah says,

“Allah forgives not that a partner is associated with Him, but He forgives other than that to whom He wills.” (4:48)

But does this mean that Allah wants us to stay in the mosques and never go out of them? Or that He wants us to worship Him by obeying Him and carrying out His commands?

To pray and fast, is worship.

To abandon what we have been forbidden to do, is worship.

To help people and to treat them in the best way is worship.

To provide for one’s wife and children, is worship.

To have a job in order to collect money in the right way, is worship.

To enter a piece of food in your wife’s mouth, is worship.

To strive to reconcile people when they differ, is worship.

To remove a stone or any harmful thing away from the passage of people, is worship.

Hence, every aspect of the affairs of life is worship, not just praying and fasting. The Islamic concept of the term “worship” is much wider than the narrow concept in other religions.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “And even man’s sexual intercourse (with his wife) is (considered) an act of charity.” They said, “O Messenger of Allah. Is there reward for him among us who satisfies his sexual passion?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Do you see that if he were to satisfy it with what is forbidden (*haraam*), would it be a sin on him?” They said, “Yes. He said, “Then if he satisfies it with something lawful (*halaal*) he will be rewarded.” [Muslim

1006]

Two Valuable Rules

The Qur'an gives us two important rules as a condition for worship to be accepted. Allah said, ***“So whoever would hope for the meeting of his Lord, then let him do righteous deed and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.”*** (18:110)

This verse indicates two conditions for our worship to be acceptable:

The first is that our intention must be pure so that one does “not associate in the worship of his Lord anything.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah accepts no act that is not purely for His sake, done out of longing for His presence.”⁽¹⁰⁾ It is not a question of someone's act of worship simply being rejected if he associates another with Allah in it. Indeed, if this is the case, all of his previous deeds will be cast down:

“And We will come to what they have done of deeds and make them as dust dispersed (unaccepted).” (25:23)

And man will be punished for the deeds he did with impure intentions. For Allah does not see appearances only, but He sees his heart, and He knows the pure heart from the corrupt.

Once al-Fadil b. Iyad recited the verse:

“It is He Who has created death and life to test you, which of you is best in deed.” (67:2)

Then he said, “the best of deeds is the most sincere one, and the most correct.”

Someone asked him, “What do you mean to say?”

He said, “The act (of worship) if it is not done sincerely, will not be accepted. And if it is not done correctly, will not be accepted.

And none of the deeds will ever be accepted unless they are sincere and correct.

To be sincere means: to worship Allah for His sake and pleasure only.

To be correct means to worship Allah according His Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Al-Nisa'i, (59).

The consequence of Insincerity

Abu Hurraira related a *hadith* in which the Prophet ﷺ said,
“The first people who will be consumed by the fire are three:
A scholar who has learned the Qur’an by heart.
A *mujahid* (soldier for Allah) who was killed in the path of
Allah.
And a very rich man.

The first to be called to account will be the reciter of the Qur’an. Allah will ask him, “Did I not teach you what I sent down to My Messenger?” He will say, “Yes, My Lord.” And Allah will ask him, “What did you do with this?” He will say, “I used to stand reciting by night and by day, hoping for Your reward.”

Allah will say, “You lied,” and the Angels will say, “You lied,” and then Allah will say, “But you only wanted for people to say, so and so is a reciter of the Qur’an. And they had already said it. Take him to Hell.”

Then the rich man will be brought and Allah will ask him, “Was I not generous to you to the point that you were not in need of anyone?” He will say, “Yes, My Lord.” Allah will ask him, “So what did you do with what I gave you?”

“My Lord, You provided me with wealth, and I spent it on the poor, hoping for Your reward and for Paradise.” Allah will say, “You lied.” And the Angels will say, “You lied.” Allah will say, “Rather, you wanted them to say that so and so is a generous man. And that is what they said. Take him to Hell.”

Then the man who was killed in the path of Allah will be brought. Allah will ask him, “Why were you killed?” He will say, “My Lord, I went out to battle for Your sake and I fought the enemy until I was killed, hoping for Your reward and for Paradise.” Allah will say, “You lied.” And the Angels will say, “You lied.” Then Allah will say, “Rather, you fought so that

people would say so and so is a brave man, and that is what they
said. Now take him to Hell.”

Then the Messenger of Allah, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, “O Abu Hurraira, these are the first three of Allah’s creations whom Hell will begin to burn on the Day of Resurrection.”⁽¹⁾

These are the two main pillars of *tawhid*: Islam is the worship of Allah in the light of the Qur’an and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet.

Whoever acts upon these two things and absolves himself of associating anything with Him, and absolves himself of innovation in religion will find success.

The two main dangers facing this Nation have always been *shirk*, associating something else with Allah, and *bid’a*, innovating in religion by trying to worship Allah by doing things that the Prophet ﷺ did not teach us to do.

⁽¹⁾ Tirmidhi; al-Hakim, 3/111.

BELIEF IN ALLAH

Is there a need to prove His existence?

Allah is the Lord and Creator, the Provider, the Bringer of Life and Death. This is obvious and requires no evidence. The processes of creation, of sustaining the universe, of Divine Dominion and Action in the world are in the hands of Allah; no part of creation shares in any of this. Such belief is firmly rooted in the nature of human beings.

Human nature bears witness to the existence of Allah, as the Qur'an points out in the story of Pharaoh and his people:

“And they denied them [the signs of Allah] while their souls acknowledged them out of injustice and haughtiness. So see how was the end of the corrupters!”
(27:14)

Just as when Pharaoh demanded Moses with pride and arrogance, “What is the Lord of the Worlds?” Moses simply told him, ***“You have already known that none has sent down these [signs] except the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth as proofs.”*** (17:102)

Likewise, the prophets called, first of all, for the worship of Allah, saying,
“Worship your Lord, you have for you no other god than He.”

If this needed any other proof than that which one could find in his own heart, then the prophets would have sought to support their assertion, by calling people to believe in the existence of Allah and then beginning to teach them the means of worshipping Him, but they did not do that. Rather, they began with the subject of worship.

When an Arab tribesman was asked to prove the existence of Allah, he said, "Glory be to Allah! The Camel's dung means there were camels that passed by, and footprints show you there is a trail. So the heavens with its mansions of the stars, and the earth with its lofty heights, does this not point to the All-Knowing, the All-Aware?"

Reason also tells us that the existence of all that is, is evidence of a Creator. There is no created thing without a creator, which brought it out of nothingness, and into being. Nothing could have created itself. Something must have formed it out of nothingness. Therefore, the existence of these things is itself evidence of the existence of the Creator. The Almighty said, "***Or were they created of nothing, or were they themselves the creators?***" (52:35).

Indeed, the evidence is as the Almighty has said, "***And [the proof is with] in your own selves. Don't you then see?***" (51:21)

Is not the fruit of the womb a sign of Allah? Are not blood vessels and arteries and hearts, fingerprints never the same from one person to another, are not these also signs of the supreme Creator? But in comparison to this enormous universe which Allah has created, we are only a very small sign, as Allah said: "***The creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of mankind, but most of mankind know not***" (40:57).

Look and Contemplate

Just look at the millions of brilliant stars on their finely ordered courses. Despite their vast numbers and the incredible speed of their flight, they do not collide one against the other. Look at the earth and its seas and mountains, and look at its people and its animals. Who holds them on the brink of existence and saves them from certain destruction?

Look at the sun. Who fuels its furnace and keeps it burning steadily, neither too hot nor too cold, century after century? If the earth were to approach it but only a little, it would be burned to a cinder and if it were to stray away from it by only a little, it would be frozen solid. After such signs would anyone require more evidence of a Creator?

Just forget about looking at the universe.

Look at the creation of mankind. No two finger print nor eyelashes are identical.

Allah is the One who has created all things and appointed them on their course. He is the Creator of this universe, its Sustainer and its Possessor. He has no partners in creation and none to share His dominion. There is nothing like Allah. Everything is in His hand, created by Him, powerless and helpless except by the leave of the Lord Who created them. There is none that may question what He has ordained and none that may challenge what He has commanded.

The disbelievers of the Arabs among whom the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent used to believe in the existence of Allah, that He was the Creator of all things and their possessor. They never denied this. What they denied was that the prophets had called mankind to the worship of one god only—Allah, and that the gods of their fathers were all false gods. That is why they used to say,

"This is a magician, and a liar, has he made the gods One god? That is something strange." (38:4)

This, in fact, was the reason for the conflict between the prophets and their people. Thus the Almighty said, ***“And if you ever ask them, ‘Who has created the heavens and the earth?’ they would surely say, ‘It is Allah The Almighty, the All-Knowing, Who created them.’”*** (43:9)

The First Mission of Prophets

The first thing the prophets told the people was to, “Worship Allah. You have no other god.” They did not merely tell them to believe that Allah is the Creator, the Provider, and the Bringer of Life and Death and to take stock of this in their hearts. Had they been sent to teach the people that Allah exists, and that He is the Creator and Provider and the Eternal One, then there would not have been any conflict between the prophets and their people at all, since they would have been in natural agreement with them.

Yet the Qur’an takes issue with the disbelievers for rejecting that the uniqueness of the Creator is evidence that only the Creator should be worshipped. While they believed that while Allah was the Creator and that all other things were created by Him, they would not accept that they should not worship anything else but Him. Consider the words of the Almighty,

“Who is it that has created the heavens and the earth, and sent down for you water from the sky, by which We caused to grow gardens of joyful beauty, you were never able to grow its trees? Is there a deity with Allah? [No], but They are a people who ascribe equals (with Him)!”
(27:60)

That is to say, do you not realize that He is the only Creator and that none may share with Him in Creation—things, which created nothing and possess nothing and are helpless to bring either benefit or harm.

Consider also His words,

“O People, remember the favor of Allah upon you! Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no God but Him. So how are you deluded?” (35:3).

Here Allah reminds us of His Uniqueness as Creator and ends the verse by confirming His Uniqueness as the object of worship.

A turning away and not a denial

The atheism, which the West has come to profess, is in truth only a turning away from Allah. Allah mentions it in the Qur'an saying,

“And when We bestow favor upon man, he turns away and distances himself aside, but when evil touches him, then he is full of extensive supplication.” (41:51)

“And those who disbelieved turn away from what they are warned of.” (46:3)

“The people’s time of account has approached while they are in heedlessness turned away.” (21:1)

These people forget about their atheism when hardship or misfortune strikes them. While they turn away they still recognize their Lord; in truth they have not forgotten. Allah has made a compact with the Children of Adam that they should all recognize that Allah is their Lord. There are no exceptions to this, not Pharaoh, and not Marx, and not anyone else who ever rose to announce that God does not exist.

WORSHIP ONE IF YOU BELIEVE IN ONE

Allah is the One God, the only One that deserves to be worshipped. We worship none other than Him, and we call upon none other than Him. This is what the Qur'an teaches us in 6:162:

“Say, ‘My prayer and my sacrifice, my living and my dying, belong to Allah, Lord of All beings.’” Any other object to which people devote themselves in worship is utter falsehood, creating nothing and owning nothing. Allah said,

“That is because Allah is the Truth and that what they call upon other than Him is falsehood.” (31:30)

If Allah is the single Lord of mankind, the single Owner of mankind, then He is also the only true God of mankind. This fact is laid out in three verses of the Qur'an, the first of which is from Sura al-Nas, “Say, I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind.” It is therefore Allah's right upon His worshippers that they worship Him alone, and that they turn to Him alone in supplication and in dependence, in longing

and in fear and in humility, and when offering any kind of devotion.

This was the great mission for which the prophets had all been sent, and this was the reason for the enmity and animosity that rose up between them and their respective peoples. Allah sent Abraham to his people as they had begun to worship images of the righteous men from among Nuh's people, and to worship the stars, which they thought were the incarnations of Angels. They neglected Allah and sought help from others; they took recourse to intermediaries and intercessors that held no authority from Allah and yet said that this was only to help them draw nearer to Him.

The Qur'an criticizes them saying,

“And they worship other than Allah that which neither harms them nor benefits them, and they say, ‘These are our intercessors with Allah’. Say, ‘Do you inform Allah something He does not know in the heavens or on the earth?’ Glory be Him, and high above what they associate (with Him)!” (10:18)

Also:

“And they worship besides Allah that which does not possess for them [the power of] provision whatever from the heavens and from the earth at all and they are not able, so do not assert similarities to Allah, truly knows, while know not” (16:73)

“Say, ‘Have you considered that which you invoke besides Allah? Show me what they have created of the earth? Or did they have partnership in creation of the heavens? Bring me a book before this, or a remain trace of knowledge if you are true.’”

And who is more astray than he who invokes apart from Allah some one that never respond to him until the Day of Judgement, and they were unaware of their invocation and [they will be] when people are gathered, they will become enemies with them, and they will reject their worship [They used to address to them]” (46:4-6)

“If you asked them, ‘Who created the heavens and the earth?’ they would surely say, ‘it is Allah’ Say, ‘have you seen those you invoke besides Allah, if Allah intended me harm, can they remove His harm? Or if He intended me mercy, can they withhold His mercy?’ Say, ‘Allah is enough for me. The trusted One whom all put their trust in Him.’” (39:38)

And He said,

“Say, ‘Supplicate those you claimed [as deities] with Allah: they possess nothing even as the weight of an atom neither in the heavens nor in the earth.’” (34:22).

“He causes the night to enter the day, and He causes the day to enter into the night, and has subjected the sun and the moon. Each running [its course] for a specified term. that is Allah your Lord. To Him belongs sovereignty. But those whom you invoke other than Him do not possess as much as the cover of a date seed.

If you invoke them, they do not hear your supplication, and if they heard, they would not respond to you, and on the Day of Judgement, they will deny your association. And none can inform you like One Who is well aware.

(35:13-16).

“And do not invoke besides Allah that which neither benefits you nor harms you, for if you did, then you would surely be of the wrongdoers [polytheists].” (10:106)

The meaning of ‘wrongdoers’ is worshippers of false gods, since to associate others with Allah is the greatest of all wrongdoings; it is the evil that is directed against the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

It is not enough simply to believe that Allah is one, rather the sincerity of this belief must be backed up by open acts of worship, and also privately by the purification of one’s intentions that any acts of worship be devoted to Allah alone.

The Meaning of Faith in Allah

Faith in Allah does not mean simply to believe that Allah exists, for believers and disbelievers can both share this belief, as can the true believer and the hypocrite, and the monotheist and the polytheist. *Iblis* himself believes that Allah exists, and he has sworn before Allah that he will lead mankind astray, as has been related in the Qur'an. Faith in the One God means that all worship shall be devoted exclusively to Allah, and that all care will be taken to ensure that this is so. Many of those who claim to believe in the One God are themselves polytheists. They worship others beside Allah and claim that these are intercessors or intermediaries between them and Allah. This is blatant disbelief, the act of associating others with Allah, which has led to the destruction of many who have come before us.

The Spirit of Worship

We can think of worship as having both a spirit and a form.⁽¹²⁾ Its spirit is the doctrine of belief, which stands in its defense, the goal that was created for its purpose. Its form is the physical act of the worshiper as tongue and body move seeking the pleasure of Allah. For if the reason for performing the prayer, for paying *zakat*, for performing the pilgrimage, for **fasting** and for fighting in the way of Allah were not to seek Allah's pleasure alone, then what we have would be worship without spirit. It would be wooden and dead.

The heart that knows what benefits and harms, and what is permitted and what is forbidden are all in the hand of Allah, will be overflowing with awe of Him and fully aware of the meaning of the words "Allah is Greater than all things." With this, everything else pales in significance before the overwhelming presence of Allah. For this reason, all corrupt action begins with the corruption of the doctrine of one's faith.

(¹²) This section is adapted from *A general introduction to the religion of Islam* by Ali Tantawi, page 79.

THE SUBLIME NAMES OF ALLAH

This important subject is known in Arabic as *tawhid al-Asma wasifat*. This is so important that some people believe we should consider it independently, rather than as a sub-category of the doctrine of Divine Unity. We have chosen to include it in our discussion here because ignorance of it can place people in danger of being misled and committing acts of disbelief even if they believe in One God.

If a Christian tells us: I do not believe in the trinity, I do not believe that Allah has a son any more. We have to understand that trinity and sonship referring to Allah are not the only problem in Christianity, if one still believes that Allah rested after creating the universe, that He wrestled with Jacob and was defeated: such beliefs will keep a person a disbeliever.

Those who claim to be believers should seek the true knowledge to make their belief sound. For not every belief should necessarily be considered unless it is sound.

For example, we find the Jews increasing faithlessness and falsehood, even though they insist on the purity of their monotheism as compared with the beliefs of the Christians. They would claim, for instance, that “the hand of Allah is bound,” and that He was busy for six days creating the heavens and the earth and He decided to take a rest, that He created mankind in His own image, that He would become annoyed and upset, and that He would cry and become insolent. They even began to claim that He came down to earth and fought with Jacob, and that Jacob fought with Him.

They believe in a god who has no enough knowledge and who need to be given further information, you may read this part from their scriptures,

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, “Speak to the children of Israel.. They shall take for them a lamb. You shall eat it with your loins girded, and your shoes on your feet, and you shall eat it in

haste: For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, and the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the Land of Egypt.” (Exodus 12:1-13)

Referring imperfect attributes to Allah makes the belief in One God useless.

The Christians add fatherhood to His divine qualities. They made Him part of a group of deities and considered these all to be equal. Since one of these “deities” was essentially a man, the qualities of Allah became inseparable from those of human beings.

It was for this reason that the Qur’an mentions some of these false claims and then denies them directly saying,
“Allah is glorified above all that they ascribe to Him.”
(17:43)

These people will be shown the falsehood of their own claims on the Day of Resurrection and they will say to those, whom they used to worship,

“By Allah, we were indeed in manifest error. When we equated you with the Lord of the Worlds. And no one misguided us except the criminals. So [now] we have no intercessors, nor a devoted friend. Then if we only have another chance to return [to the world] we will be of the believers.” (26:97-102)

They associated others with Allah by falsely giving Him qualities, which could never be ascribed to Him.

To claim that the divine qualities of Allah are the same as the qualities of human beings is to give human beings a share in the qualities that can in fact only be ascribed to Allah.

In this way people were misled to raise their hands and address their prayers and supplicate to others than Allah. People would go to the graves of the prophets and the righteous people of old to ask them for help and to ask them for protection from evil and also,

they used to believe that the occupants of these graves could actually hear them.

Had it not been for this belief that even as they rested in their graves they could hear the pleas of all who call upon them, that they could help them and punish their enemies and intercede on their behalf before Allah, then they would not have addressed their pleas to them, nor gone to their graves asking for their help.

Even if Christians abandoned believing in the Trinity, even if they believed that Jesus is no more than a human prophet, and not the son of God, but kept asking him and his mother Mary for help instead of Allah, and taking them as mediators, they would still be considered polytheists, worshipping others beside Allah.

Many people do not understand this point: the Christians do not worship only the Messiah, they worship every priest and every saint, asking for their favor along with that of Allah. This is why Allah asks the Messiah in the Qur'an,
“Did you say to people, ‘Take me and my mother as two deities besides Allah?’” (5:116)

It is well known that the Christians do not claim that Mary is a god, yet they still worship her even though they may not openly claim that she is herself a deity. Their practice speaks for itself.

When they believe that she can hear their prayer to her from anywhere at any time, they are giving her a divine character, by hoping for her mercy, which they should hope from Allah. Among the attributes of Allah are: that He is the All knowing, the All hearing, the All merciful.

It should now be clear that the Divine Oneness of Allah as expressed in His sublime names and divine qualities is one of the most important aspects of belief.

The point is made even more plain when you consider that the greatest verse of the Qur'an is *Ayatul-Kursi* which is comprised only of divine names and qualities of Allah,

“Allah! There is no god but Him, the ever -Living, the sustainer of [all existence]. No sleep nor drowsiness overtake Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is [presently] before them and what is behind them, and they encompass nothing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His chair extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.” (2:255)

Also, one of the shortest chapters, *al-Ikhlās* (112), which is equal in its greatness and value to one-third of the Qur’an, contains only divine names and qualities of Allah:

“Say, ‘He is Allah, [One God] Alone! Allah, the Eternal Refuge, He neither begets, nor is He begotten. And there is none equivalent to Him.’ ”

These few lines confirm the unity of Allah and His independence from Allah’s creation. They deny that He procreates and that He was born of any other being, and they deny that He is like any other thing that ever existed or ever will exist.

Three fundamental rules regarding

the divine names and attributes of Allah

We can think of the subject of the divine names and attributes of Allah as being founded on three fundamental rules:

- **The First Rule:** is the prohibition against ignorantly delving into the divine names and attributes of Allah. It is not possible to gain any knowledge about this by means of human reason or intellectual endeavor because Allah has hidden this knowledge from us. All we can know about the divine names and attributes of Allah is what Allah Himself has taught us of them, such as when

He said,

“And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except for what He wills.”(2:255)

The way of *Ahlusunnah Wal Jama-ah* (the followers of the Prophet’s *Sunnah*) in such matters is to believe in whatever the Qur’an and the *Sunnah* teach us about the divine names and attributes of Allah without making distortions and additions to this.

For He knows better than His servants about how He should be described. Had He known that these attributes do not suit His Majesty, He would have not described Himself in such and such manner. Thus Imam Ahmad said, “Allah should not be described except by what He had described Himself, or as His Prophet had described Him: this must never exceed the limits of the Qur’an or the *Sunnah*.”

By the same token, no one may count all the names of Allah, or know what their number is, for there are names which Allah has laid claim to which are unknown to all creation, including the prophets of Allah. Thus the Prophet ﷺ said, “Oh my Lord, I ask you by every name which You have taken unto Yourself, or revealed in Your Books, or taught to anyone of Your creation, or kept for Yourself in Your hidden knowledge, that You make the Glorious Qur’an the spring of my heart and the light of my breast.”⁽¹³⁾

⁽¹³⁾ Ahmad 1:391 *hadith hassan*

As for the Prophet's statement that "Allah has ninety-nine names, whoever learns them shall enter Paradise", the scholars all agree that this does not limit His names to ninety-nine, rather it means that among the names of Allah there are ninety-nine which, having learned them, the servant of Allah will enter Paradise. The scholars add that teaching them means to memorize them and to keep them in your heart and to observe the limits that they impose on your behavior. For example, if you know that Allah is the "All-hearing, the All-seeing", then you will be very reluctant to disobey Him since you know that He is watching you and that nothing is ever hidden from Him.

If people did not know that Allah was "All-forgiving, All-merciful", then they would fall into despair before the weight of their own sins, without any hope of receiving the mercy of Allah. And if they did not know that He was the "Compeller, the Owner of Power," then they would not believe that He will punish them and they would do whatever they pleased.

As we saw in the *hadith* related above, Allah is to be called upon by His divine names and attributes, and He has said,

"And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them." (7:180)

- **The Second Rule:** the prohibition upon attributing any defect to Allah, or likening Him to any part of His creation. This is essentially the meaning of the phrase "*Subhan Allah*." That is to say, "May Allah be glorified. He is above all defects and above all similarity to anything in creation."

- **The Third Rule:** despairing to comprehend the nature of these names and attributes.

It is allowed to ask, "What are the meanings of the term 'Allah's hand' and 'Allah's coming'?" But it is not allowed to ask: "How His hand looks or how He comes."

It is not prohibited to ask after their meanings, for Allah told us that He comes down at the last third of every night to lowest heaven, offering His mercy and listening to those who seek His mercy. But He did not tell us how this happens.

If someone asked, for example, about how Allah comes down to the lowest heavens, then you should ask him, "What does Allah look?" He may say, "I don't know." Then you would say, "I do not know either how His coming down looks like."

This is because knowledge about the "how" of an attribute requires further knowledge about the One to which it is attributed. The One to which it is attributed is Allah, and what Allah has taught us Himself as His revelation is all we know.

What He has taught us through His revelation we already know, but what He did not teach us there is no way to know. In other words our knowledge about Allah is based on His revelation not on reason.

In fact, reason itself has no stabilized law; this mind disagrees with that mind, some people think one thing, and others think another thing. Allah said,

"And if the truth had followed their desires [inclinations], the heavens and the earth and whoever is in them would have been ruined." (23:71)

This is in fact what happens when people prefer their own reasoning to the sources of the *Shariah*, and each person takes his opinion and twists his mind with it. This is what leads some people to say that it is neither reasonable nor possible that we will see Allah on the Day of Judgement, and so we are obliged to point out the words of Allah Almighty, who said,

"That day their faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord." (75:22-23)

According to another point of view, a vision of Allah is reasonable. We do not mean to say here that reason has no role to

play, but rather, human reason and intelligence have their limits. It is not reasonable to let reason works independently concerning unseen matters, which are unbearable, and above its limit.

Where do we find the role of the mind regarding the secret of our spirits, which have been attached to our bodies? The mind is still unaware of it.

Since reason could never bring us one iota closer to understanding the nature of our own souls, how could it then be of any use to us in understanding something much greater? Should we presume to bring the text of the Qur'an and the *Sunna* to the Tribunal of Reason while human minds remain at odds against one another? Surely, it is beyond reason to expect that the frailties of human intelligence could ever be equal to the perfection of the Divine Writ.

An important point remains. The likeness of the mind's relationship to the revelation (the Qur'an and *sunnah*), is as the likeness of that of the eye to light. To see, one must have eyes, and also one must have light. Likewise, to make use of the revealed sources of the law, one must use one's mind. But to attain the objectives to which the law points, we must continue to apply our intelligence to it in the light of the sources, the Qur'an and the *Sunna*. If we neglect these, and begin to believe that pure reason alone will guide us, we will surely fail.

Allah knows Himself better than anyone can know Him, and He knows how to choose what is most fitting in terms of names and attributes. His is the last word and the most reliable testimony to the facts. He does not describe Himself in ways that make Him similar to human beings, rather He chooses terms that are appropriate to His majesty and omnipotence.

Likewise a person may describe himself as poor and weak without being either in the literal sense. Nevertheless, some of the attributes with which Allah describes Himself may also be applied to people.

These shared concepts take on a different meaning according to which they are applied to.

An example is the concept of power or ability. **Power** is one of the divine attributes of Allah, who said, “**Allah is powerful over all things.**” (2:20) Allah also described human beings as having power, saying for example,

“**Except for those who repent before you overpower them.**” (5:34).

Thus Allah distinguishes between the power of human beings and His own omnipotence. Once we apply this quality to Allah it becomes a kind of power, which no human being could ever approach and never could participate in. Likewise, when we apply this concept to a human being, it becomes something altogether different.

The same thing happens when we apply this same concept to two different people, and likewise, there are qualities shared by human beings and animals, or by different kinds of animals. Yet even as they share similar qualities, two types of animals remain completely different. They are not similar to one another and they do not resemble one another.

People are alive, and so are plants. It goes without saying that the lives of people are different from those of plants. Simply because we use the same word to describe the quality of being alive does not mean that the lives of people and plants need be the same in every respect. And with regard to the Creator, we should be even more heedful of these differences.

We know the difference between the honey of Paradise and the honey of this world between the fruits of the world and the fruits of the World to come. What about the wine of Paradise? As “Nothing of Paradise is to be found in this world other than the names of things”⁽¹⁴⁾ so do the similarities in the attributes with which Allah describes Himself and human beings also end with words alone. As for the ultimate truth, and the ultimate “how,” we know that “**there is nothing like unto Him.**” (42:11)

(14) Ibn Abbas said this in explanation of the verse “*Wa-‘atu bihi mutashabihan*”.

If we understand then we will be saved from the distortions that others fell into until it led them to confusion and left them lost and perplexed, and whose faith has become twisted by their excessive questioning.

Some of those followers of the philosophic way use a negative way in describing Allah, saying always that “Allah is not ignorant, not weak, He has no height nor width and can neither taste nor smell, that He is not over His throne, nor does He come down, and cannot be pointed to.”

They continued saying that “He is neither up, nor down, nor in this world, nor out of it..”

Note here that these are attributes of nothingness and nonexistence.

That is why it had been said about them, “Those people have lost Their God.”

This negative technique always begins with the words “does not” and contradicts the method of the Qur’an itself which is to mention positive qualities and attributes of Allah and not to speak negatively except when drawing some global comparison, or elucidation.

For example, Allah says,

“And nothing is alike unto Him and He is the All-hearing, All-seeing.”

Here, the statement begins with a negative statement, “Nothing is alike unto Him,” pre-emptying those who would compare Him to something in creation, and ends immediately with a positive statement,

“And He is the All-hearing, All-seeing” pre-emptying those who would deny a quality which Allah has attributed to Himself in their attempt to avoid making what they mistake for a comparison with created things.

Negative attributes and qualities, do not add up to anything for which we may laud or praise Almighty Allah.

If you were to describe your king or teacher that he is neither stupid nor foolish, he is not a thief, nor criminal, he would get angry with you, and would order you to be punished.

So the correct method for determining the names and attributes of Allah is to return to the ways in which Allah had described Himself and the ways in which His Prophet had described Him.

We should not negate any of His attributes, nor twist them, nor deny them under false justifications, claiming that this name or attribute of Allah should not be taken literally but figuratively. For such way has no stabilized law, but it becomes a way of mere desire.

We affirm Allah's attributes without negation or distortion, and without comparing them to the attributes of human kind, unlike the way of those who did not affirm what Allah affirmed for Himself till they denied His attributes, or those who affirmed His attributes but compared them to human attributes.⁽¹⁵⁾

⁽¹⁵⁾ This is an important point since not all of the qualities that make a created being superior to another may be attributed to Allah. A human being may eat and sleep and procreate and this may make him a superior type of creature to one, which does not eat or sleep or procreate. These qualities, however, when applied to Allah restrict rather than add to His perfection.

Types of Attributes

The attributes of Allah may be divided into two types:

First type: those attributes which are eternally and forever qualities of Allah, such as Perfect Knowledge, Life, Omnipotence, His Hearing, Seeing, Speaking, His Majesty and Grandeur, and His Mercy.

Second type: actions of Allah and what He wishes to happen, such as the words which He has revealed, His Coming Down, His Presence, His Pleasure and His Anger, and so forth.

***Taa-weel* Rationalization is a disease but not a cure**

Taa-weel means linguistically, “interpretation”, but some distort the text and call *taa-weel* that which in fact should be called *tahreef*, corruption or distortion, which gives the names of Allah the wrong meaning. The proof of corruption is that they confess that the meanings they have given are possible meanings. In other words, they confess that the meaning they give is doubtful.

Two types of people suffer from the disease of *taa-weel*.

The first type: those who, out of fear of drawing comparisons between Allah and His creation, claim that these names and attributes that Allah uses to describe Himself may be misunderstood and taken literally. They avoid affirming what Allah affirmed, thinking that this will cure them from this disease of resemblance, but they have been trapped into a greater disease, and that is the problem of negation and denial of the attributes that Allah has described Himself. This does not solve their problem, however, and in their haste to escape from what they thought was evil, they fall into something, which is truly evil.

The second type: those who are essentially beset by doubt.

They are disturbed by human understanding of logic, by the traditions of Plato and Aristotle and by other Greek philosophers who speculated about the nature of divinity without any guidance or direction from Allah. This particular problem has arisen following the translation of the ancient Greek works into Arabic. The ideas of the philosophers came to be applied to one of the

most important of the Islamic sciences, that of the knowledge of the names and attributes of Allah. Some people with troubled minds then sought to establish methods of argument which they thought would enable them to determine precisely the true nature of Allah. These methods were in fact poison to their hearts. When they tried to reconcile these methods with the sources of Islamic knowledge, they were inevitably led to deny the very attributes which Allah had ascribed to Himself. This philosophical movement has been one of the major sources of sectarianism in Islam.

WHEN RATIONALIZATION IS AN INNOVATION

The problem of rationalization did not appear until after the books of logic and philosophy became known to the Muslims. The early period of Islamic history passed without anyone having any problems at all with the Islamic teachings about the divine names and attributes of Allah. If *taa-weel* was true, the truth of it would have been known from the early scholars and indeed, from the Prophet ﷺ. Allah knows better than any of His creation how best to describe Himself to them. Does He not say, ***“Are you the most knowledgeable or Allah?”***

How then was it possible for anyone to come later and claim that rationalizations were necessary to clarify the nature of the divine names and attributes of Allah, and that without these rationalizations we must be led to draw unnatural comparisons between Allah and His creation?

Did the Prophet ﷺ make such rationalizations and instruct us to do the same? Suppose these rationalizations really do contain the truth, was this truth then lost to the Prophet ﷺ? Or did he know about it but chose not to tell anyone about it? Of course, this is inconceivable. The only other possibility is simply that these rationalizations are false. If we follow the method of rationalization, we find that we are not urged to ignore suspicion and wild fantasies about the meanings of the Revelation, rather we are urged to ignore the fundamental messages of this Revelation,

“Nothing is alike unto Him, and He is the All-knowing All-hearing.” (42:11)

“And there is nothing alike unto Him,” (112:4)

“Do you know any name for Him.” (19:65)

In fact, these fundamental Revelations abrogate their suspicions and fantasies, as Allah has said,

“But Allah abolishes what Satan proposes and then Allah establishes His revelations.” (22:52)

NOT EVERY BELIEF IS APPROVED

To say “I believe in Allah” is a common claim of all people. They all say, “We believe in Allah”. It is a characteristic of belief shared by all except those whose tongues ignore what their hearts proudly believe.

NOT ANY FAITH IS SOUND

THIS BELIEF IN ALLAH, HOWEVER, DIFFERS FROM ONE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY TO ANOTHER. SOME PEOPLE, FOR EXAMPLE, MIX THEIR BELIEF IN ALLAH WITH *SHIRK* (SETTING PARTNERS WITH HIM). AS ALLAH SAY.

“AND MOST OF THEM DO NOT BELIEVE, BUT WHILE ASSOCIATING OTHERS WITH HIM.” (12:106)

“That is because, when Allah is called alone, you reject, but when others are associated with Him then you believe! So judgement is all with Allah the Most high the most great.” (40:12)

Because of this it is necessary to impose some simple rules to fix belief firmly in place and to purify this belief from the ideas that have corrupted the minds of so many people. Once falsehood creeps into one’s beliefs, they will be twisted so much that no one may ever benefit from them in any way.

The main source of these wrong beliefs is the mishandling of the divine names and attributes of Allah.

Some people believe that Allah has manifested Himself in the form of one of His creation.

Others, such as the Jews and the Christians, believe that Allah had taken a son.

Others address their prayers to some other being hoping that this person will be an intermediary between them and Allah. They suppose that Allah will not respond to their pleas unless they are addressed through some intermediary, who should be of a higher or more noble station in the sight of Allah than they themselves are.

That is why Allah has revealed a small chapter of the Qur'an. It is as small as it is powerful, and it sums up in its few lines the evil of these wrong practices and the cure to them. This chapter is known as *al-Ikhlās*, sincerity, and reads”

“Say, "He is Allah, [One God] Alone! "Allah, the Eternal Refuge, "He neither begets nor is He born. And there is none equivalent to Him.”

THESE FEW LINES CONFIRM THE UNITY OF ALLAH AND HIS INDEPENDENCE OF ALL CREATION. THEY DENY THAT HE PROCREATES AND THAT HE WAS BORN OF ANY OTHER BEING, AND THEY DENY THAT HE IS LIKE ANY OTHER THING THAT EVER EXISTED OR EVER WILL EXIST.

SOURCES OF BELIEF

The source of doctrine should be taken from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, in the way they were understood by those who were companions to the Prophet ﷺ.

It is not a thing which can be determined by *Ijtihad*⁽¹⁶⁾. This is not a matter of anyone's opinion, considered or otherwise. The doctrines of Islam are taken directly from Allah's source of guidance, the Book and the *Sunnah*.

Our first source of doctrine is the Qur'an. This was revealed by Allah to His Prophet ﷺ who was the last of all the prophets. Our second source, after the Qur'an, is the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Nothing else can compare with these two sources when we come to discover the doctrines of Islam. They reveal all that is permitted in terms of belief, and all that is forbidden.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Ijtihad* means to exert one's effort by reasoning to differentiate right from wrong.

The Qur'an

No book on the face of the earth has been kept and cared for, as
has the Quran by this Nation.

When the verses were revealed to the Prophet ﷺ he used to
commit it to memory as it was revealed to him. The moment it
descended, he then recited it in front of his companions and
commanded them to write it down and collect it and read it back to
him many times. Then he kept a copy of what they wrote down
with him in his home.

As a result, the book today is preserved. The proof is more than
one thousand four hundred years old and no one can dispute this
fact. Isn't it enough proof that the Qur'an has been preserved?

Despite the differences among Muslims groups, we can
emphasize that these are not based on the reliability of the Qur'an.

In contrast, the differences among Christians are based upon the
authenticity of the Bible, whether it should contain sixty-six books
or seventy-three, and upon many other disputes about verses that
have been omitted from the King James Version!

Some have claimed that the Qur'an was given to the Prophet ﷺ
by Christian priests who used to meet with him regularly. But if
there were Christians like those who were able to present a perfect
book to Muhammad, why could not they produce a perfect Bible
for the benefit of their own religion?

The Qur'an has been described as the "Book of Allah." In it, are
the stories of those who passed before you, and the news of what
will come after you, and it contains the judgement between those
who differ among you. It is the unbending standard against which
all things are measured. Whoever arrogantly abandons it, Allah
will destroy him, and who ever seeks guidance of another, Allah
will lead him astray. It is the solid rope of Allah, and His
Remembrance and Wisdom, and it is His Straight Path. No soul
that follows it will be deviated, nor can any tongue dress its truth
in falsehood, nor can it become old by repeated recitation. Those

who know it never tire of it. Its wonders are endless. It is the thing the *jinn* ⁽¹⁷⁾ are still saying since the first time they heard it:

“We have heard an amazing Qur’an, it guides to the right course (wisdom), so we believed in it, and we will not associate with our Lord anyone.” (72:1)

Whoever speaks by its words have spoken truth, and who ever acts upon it earns its reward, and Who ever judges by it, has done justice, and who calls others to it has guided people to the Straight Path.”

The Qur’an is the last of the testaments revealed from heaven to mankind on earth. Allah made it to confirm what had come before it and as a watcher over them. Allah said,

“Say, O mankind, the Truth has come to you from your Lord. So whoever is guided, is only guided for [the benefit of] his own soul, and whoever goes only goes astray against it, and I am not an over you a manager.” (10:108)

THE Qur’an: the book of miracles

No human being can ever produce anything like the Qur’an, regardless of how eloquent, or how clear minded or how ingenious he may be. The Qur’an is a book that was revealed to the most eloquent among the Arabs, to a people who were famous for eloquence and for the inimitable style of their poetry. When they heard the Qur’an, they were astounded and speechless, and could only yield to its majesty. Still, this did not stop their arrogance and it did not prevent them from ignorantly asserting that it must be the work of the magicians or the *jinn*. They claimed that it would not be difficult for a poet to produce something like it, although they acknowledged the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ.

Creatures that are made of fire, among them are those who ⁽¹⁷⁾ *Jinn* believe, others are disbelievers.

So, Allah challenged them to produce something like it if they could. Ten *suras* (chapters). He said, but they could not. One *surah* and still they could not. The challenge was issued to all of humanity and to the *jinn*, and for all times.

Allah said,

“Say, ‘If men and jinn gathered to produce the like of this Qur’an, they do not produce its like even if they were to each other assistants’.” (17:88)

This challenge has stood for a thousand and five hundred years and still no one has been able to answer it.

Allah said,

“Or do they say, ‘He forged it’? Say: ‘then bring forth a chapter like it, and call upon whom you could [to assist you] apart from Allah, if you are truthful.’” (10:38)

Allah Himself has taken the responsibility of protecting and preserving it from anyone, who would twist or alter it, saying,

“It is We who have sent down the Remembrance [revelation] and We are its guardians.” (15:9)

But the miracle of the Qur’an is not just a matter of eloquence.

Indeed, not an age has passed without some new miracle being discovered in it, something that was unknown to our predecessors.

Even today, in the age of science and technology, Western fair-minded scientists have admitted to the agreement between modern science and the Qur’an to the discovery of things the Qur’an has proclaimed for over a thousand years.

The Prophet ﷺ lived far from those who had detailed knowledge of science, and yet he used to know these discovered sciences because he had the connection with the One who created these sciences.

Allah said,

“Have not those who disbelieved seen that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them, and We made from water every living thing? Will they not then believe?” (21:30).

And He said,

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and in within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not enough that Your Lord is a witness of everything?” (41:53)

One who contemplates the Qur’an can find in it verses that speak of science unknown before a century or so ago. For example, we find verses that talk about planets and orbits in the solar system.

Allah said,
“And the sun runs [on course] toward its stopping point. That is the determining measure of the exalted in Might, the Knowing. And the moon, We have measured it in phases until it returns [appearing] like an old day stalk. Neither the sun [is allowed] to reach the moon, nor the night [is allowed] to win over the day. But each in an orbit is swimming.” (36:38-40)

There are other verses that speak of Allah’s creation, such as the one that mentions the barrier of water between the two seas, and the barrier between the fresh and salt water where a river flows into

the sea. This, in fact, was not discovered until the beginning of this century. (the 19th century).

Allah said,
“Or who [other than Allah] that has made the earth a stable ground, and placed within it rivers and made for it firmly set mountains and placed a barrier between the two seas? A god [should be taken] with Allah? Certainly, most of them are ignorant!” (27:61)

Another verse speaks about the accumulation of clouds and how rain comes out of them:

“Didn’t you see how Allah drives clouds, then brings them together, then makes them into a mass, then you see the rain emerge through it. And He sends down from the sky mountains [of clouds] within which is hail, So and He

strikes with it whom He wills, and turns it away from whom He wills. The flash of its lightning nearly takes away the eyesight. Allah rolls the night and the day. Surely in that is a lesson for those with eyes.” (24:43-44)

There are verses that speak of levels of waves in the sea, a kind of wave on the surface and another under it. This was, in fact, only discovered in this century.

“Or like darkneses in a bottomless sea with waves above waves, above which are clouds, darkneses, one is above the other. If one holds out his hand, he can hardly see it. Thus for whomever Allah makes no light, for him there is no light.” (24:40)

There are verses that speak of the different stages of fetal development in the womb, and each stage is identified by a name that describes the form of the fetus:

“We created man from an extract of clay, then We set him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging [i.e., the womb]. Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, then We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], then We made [from] the lump bones, then We covered the bones with flesh and then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators! (23:12-14)

These verses describing all the stages of well-ordered fetal development, as well as others, caused Dr. Keith Moore – one of the most respected embryologists, to confirm these observations in his book *The Developing Human*, saying that the Qur’an has described this accurately, and well before human science could ever have done it.

The second source

the *Sunnah*

The *Sunnah* is an important source of doctrine and its understanding. This is because:

- It contains prohibitions and allowances that are not mentioned in the Qur'an.
- It explains the verses of the Qur'an and tells the incident or the circumstance by which the verses were revealed.
 - It elaborates the abstract verses.
 - It unlimits the limited verses.

An example is the verse saying,
“***For those who did good (their reward) is good and even more.***” (10:26)

The term “more”, The Prophet ﷺ explained, means a vision of the face of Allah in Paradise. No one would have been able to know what more, people of Paradise will be given until the *Sunnah* explained it.

Another is the meaning of the verse , “***and establish prayer.***” Allah said simply, establish prayer, but did not say how many prayers, nor even how we should pray. Similarly, we are commanded to pay *zakat* (charity), but no details of how this is to be assessed or how often it is to be paid or given. These details come to us from the *Sunnah*. The *Sunnah* also contains prohibitions that are not mentioned in the Qur'an.

Because of this, Muslims have all agreed that the *Sunnah* must be a second source for Islamic doctrines and beliefs.

The Prophet ﷺ explained this saying, “I have left you with two things. You shall never go astray so long as you hold tightly on to them: The Book of Allah, and my *Sunnah*.”⁽¹⁸⁾

⁽¹⁸⁾ Malik, *Muwatta*, 1:93.

Allah has commanded us to obey His Prophet ﷺ saying,
“Whoever obeys the Prophet has obeyed Allah” (4:80).
If obedience to Allah means following what was revealed in the
Qur’an, then obedience to the Prophet ﷺ means to keep to his
Sunnah. Allah said,

**“It is He who has raised up among the common people a
Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses
and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the
Wisdom.”** (62:2)

Wisdom is the *Sunnah* according to Ibn Abbas’s explanation of
this verse. Allah said,

**“Whatever the Messenger has given you then take-it, and
whatever he has forbidden you-refrain from it.”** (59:7)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I was given the Qur’an and something like
it with it.”⁽¹⁹⁾

Whoever rejects the *Sunnah* which the Prophet ﷺ brought to us
has disobeyed Allah in conformity with this verse, and has not
taken what the Prophet ﷺ brought.

The Prophet ﷺ said “I should not find any of you leaning upon
his couch who, when told of something that I ordered, then says, ‘I
don’t know, (I know only the Qur’an)! We only follow what we
find in the Book of Allah’” The Prophet ﷺ then said, “I have been
given the Qur’an and something like it with it!”⁽²⁰⁾ In another
narration he said, “The Messenger of Allah has forbidden things as
Allah has forbidden things.”⁽²¹⁾

This is confirmed by what Allah said in the verse,
**“Fight those who do not believe in Allah nor in the Last Day,
those who do not forbid what Allah and His Messenger have
forbidden.”** (9:29)

Allah also informs us of the Prophet’s

⁽¹⁹⁾ *Tirmidhi*. Narration is authentic.

⁽²⁰⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽²¹⁾ *Tirmidhi* No. 2663. *Albani* said in *mishkat* “Authentic” (See *mishkat* No. 162-163)

“He enjoins upon them what is lawful, and forbids them what is unlawful.” (7:157)

Both of these verses confirm that the Prophet ﷺ does prohibit and permit as Allah does.

This being the case, the *Sunnah* contains prohibitions and permissions that do not appear in the Qur’an, which was the first part of the revelation. Then what is prohibited and what is permitted must depend on correct and sound narrations, since Allah has forbidden us to declare things to be lawful or unlawful by doubtful evidence.

As example of what was prohibited in the *Sunnah* but not in the Qur’an, is the use of animals with fangs as food, and the eating of birds with talons, and the eating of domestic donkeys, and the wearing of gold and silk by men, while women may wear both.

An example of what was permitted, according to the *Sunnah*, what is found dead in the sea may be eaten though it had not been slaughtered. Allah said, “***Maitah*** [animals found dead unslaughtered]⁽²²⁾ ***are forbidden to you***” (5:3). Then, the *Sunnah* made an exception to this for fish.

Allah said,
“you have an excellent pattern in the Messenger of Allah, [an example to follow] for he who hopes Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often.” (33:21)

How then could a Muslim take the Messenger as an example, while he rejects his *Sunnah* and claims it has nothing to do with him?

Sometimes the *Sunnah* restricts the meaning of the Qur’an.
Allah said,

“Oh believers, prescribed for you is legal retribution for those murdered - the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female.” (2:178)

The *Sunnah* pronounced that if the victim was a disbeliever and the killer was a Muslim, this ruling would not apply. The Prophet ﷺ

⁽²²⁾ animals allowed to be eaten but were not slaughtered expressly for food.

said that a Muslim would not be executed in retaliation for the killing of a disbeliever.

THE collection and recording of the sunnah

Those who believe that Allah has undertaken to preserve only the first part of His revelation (the Qur'an) and not the second part of it (the *Sunnah*) are mistaken. This error has led those who sometimes call themselves "Qur'anists" to deny the *Sunnah* and to restrict themselves to what is contained in the Qur'an.

They are also mistaken to believe that the verse of the Qur'an, "***It is We Who have sent down the Remembrance, and it is on Us to preserve it.***"

(15:9) Applies exclusively to the Qur'an. In fact, this part of 'the Remembrance' comprises any of what Allah revealed to the Prophet, whether Qur'an and or *Sunnah*, both are covered by Allah's promise in this verse.

A practical example of how Allah preserves the *Sunnah* is the existence of people in every generation who devote their lives in memorizing the *Sunnah*, in learning it and in studying the critical analysis of its lines of transmission.

In the early years of his mission, the Prophet ﷺ did not permit anyone to write down what he had said. This was because he was afraid that people would get these mixed up with the Qur'an. He said, "Do not write down anything from me other than the Qur'an. Whoever has written down anything other than the Qur'an should erase it. There is no harm if you tell one another what I say, but whoever lies deliberately about me and says something that I did not say should prepare for himself a seat in hellfire."⁽²³⁾

This prohibition on writing down the *Sunnah* was only disallowed at the beginning of his mission. Once the Qur'an was firmly set in the hearts of the companions and they had committed it to memory, the Prophet ﷺ began to permit them to write down what he said. Abu Hurrariya said, "None of the Prophet's

⁽²³⁾ Muslim, (3004).

companions are narrating more *hadiths* than me except for Abdullah bin Amr. He used to write, but I do not.”⁽²⁴⁾ The Prophet ﷺ was once speaking from the pulpit (*minbar*) and a man called Abu Sha asked him if he could write down what was said. The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Write for Abu Shah.’⁽²⁵⁾ So the Prophet allowed his words to be written.

⁽²⁴⁾ Bukhari, (113); Tirmidhi, (2670).

⁽²⁵⁾ Bukhari, (112); Abu Daud, (455).

How hadith narrations are confirmed

In the early years after the Prophet's death the companions used to write down *hadiths* without paying much attention to their *isnads*, or chains of transmission. But when Islam began to spread into new lands and the number of Muslims grew rapidly, certain intellectual currents began to stir. These in turn gave rise to sects and cults, such as the *Qadariyah* (who denied predestination and the *Jabriyah* who confirmed predestination wrongly, and numerous Sufi cults, not to mention new philosophical movements.

With these developments, deviant groups began to spread, calling people to extremist beliefs of one form or another. Some, like the Shias, glorified individuals, while others, such as the Sufis, began to invent extreme forms of asceticism and dependence upon beggary as they withdrew from the world, cutting all ties to their wives, children and parents.

Every sect began to fabricate *hadiths* to support its claims and many contradictory views and many innovations began to be expressed through fabricated *hadiths*. By that time, the companions and those who had come after them had begun to take an uncompromising stand in front of a babble of contradictory claims.

What we now know as the science of biography and biographical criticism appeared. This consisted in the detailed study of the circumstances and means by which a *hadith* had been transmitted, and included an assessment of the trustworthiness of those who related the account, their moral character, and their commitment in following the *Sunnah*.

It included considerations for the times in which they lived, the places where they lived, and information about the names of their fathers and their children, the names of their teachers and their students.

They divided the *hadith* into three broad categories:

1. *sahih* (correct).
2. *da'eef* (incorrect or weak).
3. *maudu* (false or fabricated).

The category of a *hadith* was determined by its *isnad* (chain of transmission) and by whether or not it met had the criteria for a particular group.

Ibn Sirin said, "They (the companions and their followers, *taabi'een*⁽²⁶⁾) used not to ask about the *isnad* (names of narrators), but when the trials (of setting false narrations) began, we then started saying, 'name to us your narrators. After this they were observing cautiously the status of every narrator, and then they take narrations from those who were known to be followers of the *Sunnah*, and leave (or reject) the narrations of those who were known as innovators in religion." Also Abdullah Ibn al-Mubarak said, "*isnad* (observing chain of narration) is part of religion. Without *isnad*, any one will say what he desires."⁽²⁷⁾

Scholars say that the science of *isnad* is a special gift of Allah to the nation of Muhammad. It was given in order to protect the trustworthiness of accounts.

The People of the Book have no connected chain of what they narrate about their prophets, so all their narrations in their books are disconnected. Likewise, the deviant innovators of this *Ummah* (nation).

⁽²⁶⁾ The generation who did not see the Prophet but saw his companions who taught them the religion.

⁽²⁷⁾ Muslim Volume 1 P. 15.

This system of *isnad* is only for those to whom Allah has granted it, to the people of Islam and of the *Sunnah*, who use it to distinguish correct from incorrect narrations, to distinguish the straight from the twisted.

The people of innovation and the disbelievers only possess a mass of unchained stories that they depend upon and set as bases for matters of their religion, without knowing from where they came, and without knowing what is true from what is not; or what is beneficial from what is useless.⁽²⁸⁾

We can realize the extent of their accuracy in following up the chain of narration and the investigation of the status of every narrator when we see them, for example, distinguishing between two kinds of liars among narrators.

They call the first liar as *kaadhib*, one who was known to be a liar, but was not caught fabricating lies against the Prophete. Therefore they define his narration as *munkar* (indefinite or indeterminate) narration.

While they define the second liar as *kadhaab*, one who was caught with lies against the Prophete. And they define his narration as *Maudu'* apocryphal or spurious. This is the worst kind of narration and its use is extremely prohibited.

Many scholars have traced all of the fabricated *hadiths* we know of, and collected them into books, together with notes about them and warnings to people against them. This investigation and accuracy come as a fulfillment of what the Prophet ﷺ said, "It is enough evil that one narrates anything he hears." (i.e without examining the truth of what he narrates)⁽²⁹⁾

⁽²⁸⁾ Ibn Sirin, *Majmu'a al-fatawa*, 1/9.

⁽²⁹⁾ Muslim 1/10; Abu Daud, (4992).

Al-Shafi'i said that "The likeness of a person who seeks a *hadith* without *isnad* (examining its trustworthiness) is as the likeness of a wood gatherer who collects wood by night, carrying home with it a snake while he does not perceive it."⁽³⁰⁾

Al-Shafi'i as well as other scholars demonstrated the methodology of their school of thought by saying, "The *sahih* (correct) *hadith* is our *madhhab* (i.e reliable source of knowledge that we ought to take before giving personal thoughts or verdicts)."⁽³¹⁾ "Do not imitate us blindly apart from the correct *Hadith*."

But people abandoned this methodology of their scholars when the words and the opinion of men became to them *madhhab*, even if their opinions were contradictory to the correct *sahih hadiths* of the Prophet ﷺ.

After words, other people after them made it obligatory to follow blindly what their scholars had forbade them.

Allah has preserved the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ with this science of *isnad*. He used for it reviewers, memorizers, and guardians of the Prophet's *Sunnah*. The world did not know anyone equal to them in their wideness of memory which resulted in some of them memorizing almost one million *Hadith* with their narrators and texts.

They have set scientific rules for assessing the reliability of a *hadith* which are more stringent and more detailed than have ever been known before. Therefore, this Nation should return to the way of our predecessors of verifying the narrations about the Prophet ﷺ, and not narrating anything that it hears except after checking its chain of narration.

One should be careful, that he is conveying what the Prophet ﷺ said, not a fabrication of the liars. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever quotes a *hadith* of mine which he knows is a lie, he is one of two

⁽³⁰⁾ *Faid al-qadir*, 1/433.

⁽³¹⁾ Meaning: the correct narration is the source of our school of thought, because the prophet's saying is more important than our thoughts, for what he has given us is taken from Allah. While usually the word *madhhab* means « a school of thought ».

liars.”⁽³²⁾ And he said, “Whoever deliberately attributes a lie to me should prepare his place in hellfire.”

Whoever says, “The Prophet ﷺ said” should make sure that he said it, otherwise he will be conveying the falsehood of the liar, not the message of the Prophet ﷺ, and then he is subjecting himself to a seat of fire in Hell. For one should convey the message of the Prophet ﷺ not that of the liar.

Many have been indulgent about this matter, and we find many authors of Islamic books do not indicate the degree of reliability of the *hadiths* that they cite in their books. They even use fabricated *hadith* which are untrue, and without saying anything more, refer to *hadiths* from primary sources such as Ahmad and Tirmithi that contain both correct and incorrect narrations. But this referring is still not sufficient unless degree of *hadith* reliability is shown, such as to say, “Narrated by Ahmad and it is correct,” or better yet to use only the reliable ones.

The reason why we find incorrect narrations being used is that some scholars allow incorrect narrations that contain the encouragement about virtue of an act. But it should be known that these scholars had set conditions for this case:

- That they not be extremely weak.
- That they be related to the act that was authentically legitimized.
- That one who uses them should mention clearly their weakness.
- That they be used only in the case of meritorious acts, such as urging people to righteousness.
 - That one should never say, in this instance, “The Prophet ﷺ said...”

Even then, many scholars, including Yahya b. Ma’in, Ibn al-Arabi, Bukhari, and Muslim insisted that a *da’eef* (weak) *hadith* must never be related. They said that leniency in the matter of

⁽³²⁾ That is to say, the person who relates a lie is the same as the person who makes it up.

hadiths that relate to meritorious refers to acts that had been authentically proved by either by the Qur'an or the *sunnah*.

One should realize that Allah did not preserve the *sunnah* by using people who spent their lives in memorizing millions of narrations and distinguishing between the correct from the incorrect one, except to make it sufficient for our need of guidance. Therefore, what we have of the correct narrations should be enough for us, than using the incorrect ones.

the companions are The best interpreters of the book and *Sunnah*

The Prophet ﷺ explained the words of the Qur'an and their meaning to his companions. This gave them a great advantage over all those who came after them with regard to the interpretation of the Qur'an and the *sunnah*. No one could know the meaning of the Qur'an and *sunnah* better than they did.

The companions' understanding of the revelation and their acting upon it stands as proof against those who claim for themselves a special knowledge of its interpretation, contradictory to the true meaning they have understood.

So when two people disagree about the meaning of a *hadith* or a verse from the Qur'an, then we go back to the companions' understanding of the same text. This will close the way to those who interpret the Qur'an and the *sunnah* without knowledge, but with their false desires.

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud once said, "If you seek consolation, then seek it with the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. They were the purest of heart of this Nation and the greatest of them in knowledge. They were the least burdened and the most rightly guided of people.

Therefore, you should know their merit and follow on their footsteps. Indeed, they were on the Straight Path."⁽³³⁾

⁽³³⁾ *Jamii Bayanil Ilm* V. 2 P. 97 by Ibn Abdel Barr. See *mishkat* No. 193.

Preserving the Purity of the Sources and Avoiding Innovations

Muslims' zeal to maintain Islam from innovation must exceed the zeal of anything else. They must preserve the purity of the sources of religion from which our doctrines and beliefs spring.

These must be protected from all additions, accretions and innovations.

There is nothing more damaging to the religion than two things:

1. *Shirk* (polytheism)
2. *Bid'a* (Innovation)

And nothing draws one nearer to His Lord except it was made lawful and recommended to him through the way of Allah and His revelation. Therefore, innovations do not draw him nearer to His Lord; in fact they only take him farther away.

For Allah has completed His religion, and perfected His blessings upon humanity, and He has described to us the means of worship that draw us nearer to Him.

Allah said,

“Today I have perfected for you your religion, and completed My favor upon you, and approved for you Islam as religion.” (5:3)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I have not left that which Allah had ordered you except I ordered you, and nothing that Allah has forbidden you from, except I have forbidden you from.”⁽³⁴⁾ In another narration “There is nothing that draws you nearer to heaven but I ordered you to do, and there is nothing that draws you nearer to Hell but I warned you from doing.”⁽³⁵⁾

⁽³⁴⁾ al-Shafi'i, *Kitab al-umm*, 7/289.

⁽³⁵⁾ Al-Baihaqy in his book *Alsunan* V 7 P. 76.

If that is the case, it is obligatory upon Muslims to restrict themselves to what Allah has set out for us, without making any additions or alterations to it. To follow has become obligatory and to innovate, is forbidden.

It is agreed that the best act of worship is the worship performed by the Prophet ﷺ. He did not sanction any of the innovations and new practices that are current today among many people. Is what the Prophet taught us not enough for us today? Do we want to do more than the Prophet did and his companions did? Are we more devoted servants of Allah than they were?

Without doubt we will die before accomplishing all kinds of worship that Allah ordained to us. Why then do we seek to add innovated worship?

Is it conceivable that we have worshipped Allah in all ways of worship (obligatory and advisable) and then sit down and ask for something more?

It is hard to believe that there is a person who could complete all of his obligations, all of the things that are praiseworthy, and all of the things that the *Sunnah* permits, in the most perfect way and then try to innovate, to invent some new kinds of worship.

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "Follow and don't innovate, for what you have (been given) is already enough."⁽³⁶⁾ That is to say, Allah has laid down for you what is enough for you in the *Shariah* (The law of Allah).

Hudheifa, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "Every act of worship which the Prophet did not perform, perform it not."⁽³⁷⁾

A little worship, following the *Sunnah*, is better than a great deal of innovated worship that does not follow it. In fact Allah will not accept any act of this great deal of innovated worship that is not sanctioned by the *Sunnah* at all. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Who

⁽³⁶⁾ al-Tabarani and al-Darimi 1/69; Ahmad 1/139.

⁽³⁷⁾ Al-Baaith Ala Inkaril Bidaa Wal-Hawaadith for Abu Shamah, P. 19 Edited by Darul Fikr Allubnani

invents something in this religion of ours, something that does not belong to it, will be rejected,”⁽³⁸⁾ and he said, “Whoever does a deed unsanctioned by us will have it rejected.”⁽³⁹⁾ It will not be accepted from the person who offers it, and indeed, he will be punished, rather than rewarded for it.

⁽³⁸⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽³⁹⁾ Muslim.

The Prophet's Last Advice

The Prophet ﷺ bade farewell to his companions in a sermon that caused them to weep and made their hearts tremble. This was just before he died.

Al-'Irbaad Ibn Saariyah said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave us a sermon that brought tears to our eyes and made our hearts tremble. We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, this sounds as if it were a farewell sermon that you are giving us.' He said, 'I have left you on a safe path, it is by day as it is by night. No one strays from it after me but he is perishing. Those of you who survive will see much dissension. You must follow what you have learned from my *Sunnah*, and the *Sunnah* of my rightly-guided successors. Hold fast to it by your teeth, and beware of innovations. For every innovation is *bid'a* and every *bid'a* is misguidance."⁽⁴⁰⁾

The Prophet ﷺ said that every innovation is misguidance, This is a proof that innovation is absolutely blameworthy in religion. It is wrong to view any kind of innovation in religion as a positive thing, or to say that some kinds of innovation are good, *bid'a hasana* (good innovation), as opposed to bad innovations. If this were the case, then the Prophet ﷺ would have made this distinction. But in fact, he never mentioned *bid'a* without saying that it was a blameworthy thing. Ibn Hajr al-Asqalani said, "Innovation is blameworthy according to the *Shariah* (law).

This is different from the linguistic meaning of the word: an innovation is something that is new and has not been done before, good or bad."⁽⁴¹⁾ The meaning of innovation in Islamic law is restricted to religion to be always blameworthy.⁽⁴²⁾

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ and those who came after them in the first generations of Muslims all understood that his

⁽⁴⁰⁾Tirmidhi, 1/22; al-Hakim, 1/96; Ahmad, 4/126.

⁽⁴¹⁾ al-Asqalani, *Fath al-bari*, 13/252.

⁽⁴²⁾ *ibid.* 12/278.

words “all *bid’a* is error manifest” meant that all innovations in religion were absolutely blameworthy. Thus we hear Ibn Omar saying, “All *bid’a* (innovation) is error manifest even though some people may see good in it.”⁽⁴³⁾

Ibn Majishun said, “I heard Malik say ‘Whoever has introduced an innovation into Islam and sees that it is a good thing has asserted that Muhammad ε betrayed the Message. Allah said, **“Today I have perfected for you your religion, and completed My favor upon you, and approved for you Islam as religion.”** (5:3),

What was not taken religion on that day is not considered religion today, and nothing will reform the last of this nation other than what reformed the first of them.”⁽⁴⁴⁾

It is true that innovation can be divided into good innovations and bad innovations. This is its meaning in language. But with regard to the *Shariah*, such a distinction is not permitted.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Language has its own dimension of meaning.

You can see that the Arabic word *salah* (prayer) means the same as *du’aa* (supplication), but according to the *Shariah* there is a distinction.

Salat is a combination of actions of worship that follows a particular form: a recitation accompanied by specific gestures and physical movement. It begins with *takbir* and ends with *taslim*.

Iman bears the meaning of confirmation. According to the *Shariah*, *iman* is a confirmation, a word and a deed, while with respect to language, *iman* is only a matter of confirming something.

Those who restrict its meaning in *Shariah* according to its common meaning in language will make the same error as the *Murj’ia*⁽⁴⁶⁾ sect did.

⁽⁴³⁾ al-Ilkani, *Sharh usul i’tiqad ahl al-sunnah*, 126.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ al-Shatibi, *al-I’tisam*, 1/39.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ The “good innovation,” the *bid’a hassana*, is a fantasy of the innovators who hope to add to Allah’s religion.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Those who separate actions from faith claiming that faith can be established even without actions.

Innovators or inventors of worldly affairs are many. We see many different kinds of innovation and invention. Some of it is beneficial to people, such as the invention of automobiles and airplanes, and some of it is detrimental to us, such as the invention of atomic bombs and of novel forms of depravity. But whoever adds anything to Allah's *Shariah* has usurped Allah's right to establish His *Shariah*.

Allah said, “

“Or do they have partners [other deities] who have allowed (matters in) religion that Allah did not allow?”

(42:21).

Any addition to religion is in fact modification and an amendment to what Allah and His Messenger have given us. What is more, it is a clear contradiction of Allah's words, **“We have completed”** and **“We have perfected.”**

Allah, Most High, is not to be worshipped according to whim and according to custom. Rather, He is to be worshipped according to what He revealed to us. Allah will not accept the worship of anyone who approaches Him with an innovation. He will only accept worship performed according to what He has ordained, not according to what someone may think is nice.

Finally, innovation in religion leads to the neglect of the *Sunnah*. Hassan bin Atiya said, “No people who innovate anything in their religion but Allah removes from them something of the *Sunnah* like it, and He will not return it to them until the Day of Resurrection.”⁽⁴⁷⁾

The fundamental principle of *bid'a* is rejected, whether it is large or small. Satan decorates small innovations and trains people to accept them.

Once they have accepted a small innovation and the principle of innovating becomes acceptable to them, then they become able to accept a bigger one after Satan has brought them gradually to it. They are then on the road to the largest innovations. Allah said,

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Al-Darimi, 1/45.

“O believers, follow not the steps of Satan.” (24:21).

The unacceptability of *bid'a* is not a matter of its size, rather it is rejected because of its nature, for false is false whether big or small.

The Position of the *Salaf*⁽⁴⁸⁾ Regarding Innovation in Religion

Al-Darami relates an account of Abu Musa al-Ashari, who came across some people in the mosque doing something he did not like. So he went to Ibn Mas'ud and told him,

“I saw some people in the mosque sitting in circles waiting for the prayer to start. Every circle had a leader and the people had pebbles in their hands. The leader would say, ‘Say *Allahu Akbar* one hundred times, and they would do it. Then he would say, ‘Say *La ilaha ila Allah* a hundred times, and they would do it. Then he would say, ‘Say *Subhan Allah* a hundred times, and they would do it.”

Ibn Mas'ud asked, “What did you tell them?” Abu Musa said, “I didn't say anything. I wanted to see what you thought about it.”

Ibn Mas'ud said, “Didn't you tell them to count their sins and I guarantee that nothing of their good deeds would be lost?”

Then Ibn Mas'ud went to one of these circles and said, “What is it the thing I see you doing” They said, “We are using pebbles to count the times we remember Allah (such as *Allahu Akbar*, *La ilaha ila Allah*, and *Subhan Allah*).”

He said, “Why don't you count your sins, then make sure that none of your good deeds will be lost. O people of Muhammad, how swiftly you bring yourselves to destruction. The companions of your Prophet are still among you, his garments are not frayed and his cup is not broken.

By He in Whose Hand is my soul, you are people who are either more rightly guided than the people of Muhammad, or you have opened a door rushing headlong to manifest error.”

They said, “By Allah, we only had good intentions.” Ibn Mas'ud said, “How many are those who seek the good, but do not

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Meaning: predecessors (i.e the companions of the prophet Muhammad).

reach it? For I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, ‘There will be a people who recite the Qur’an and it will not pass beyond their throats.’ Allah knows whether most of them are among you.”

Then he left them. Amr ibn Salama said, “We saw many of them fighting us on the day of the battle of Al-Nahrawan, with the Al-Khawarij.”⁽⁴⁹⁾

Conclusion

1. The One who has set forth for us aspects of worship – such as here *dhikr* (remembrance) did not forget to ordain for us the way it is to be done, that is to count on the knucklebones of the right hand such as the Prophet ﷺ taught us to do.
2. Innovation negates the *Sunnah* and leads people to abandon it. Whence they innovate anything in their religion they will be distracted from following the *Sunnah*.
3. Satan tries to convince people to accept small innovations. If they do this he pushes them to do something more, like he did with the people whom Ibn Mas’ud reprimanded. They started reciting *tasbih* (praising) and counting with stones, and ended by taking up arms against the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and making their blood lawful.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ al-Darami, 1/68.

The Consequences of *Bid'a* (innovation)

When people became indulgent about this matter, disorder began to spread in the religion. We began to see innovation-taking root, first in the call to prayer and then in the prayer itself, then in all kinds of worship. Once it started to spread, it knew no bounds.

Much of what the Prophet ﷺ and his companions used to do was transformed beyond recognition. This is a situation that could never be pleasing to Allah and His Messenger.

What has befallen is backwardness and the empowerment of the enemies of Allah over us. We are largely responsible for this situation. So long as we do not take the initiative to put a stop to this constant adding to our religion, so long as we do not take the initiative to command what is right and forbid what is wrong, then the condition of this Nation can only go from bad to worse.

Nothing is more detrimental to a person's faith than *bid'a* and *shirk*. Satan's greatest aim is to plant these two things in the hearts of Muslims as he did to others before them, till they changed the whole of Islam. Then generations coming after them will think that Islam is a new innovation and they will be changed from faithfulness to faithlessness.

Following will remain always the criterion, test, and the measure of love.

One can not combine the loving of the Prophet ﷺ, and the innovation to his *Sunnah*.

For love is a claim that needs the proof of one's truthfulness.

Imam Ahmad showed the essentials of following the *Sunnah* by saying "The bases of *Sunnah* is the clinging to the attitude of the Prophet's companions, following their example, and abandoning innovations, for every innovation is misguidance, and the abandonment of dispute in religion."

Section Two

Aspects of Faith

THE NEED OF KNOWING THE ONENESS OF ALLAH (TAWHID)

Tawhid is the unalienable right of Allah upon His servants to worship Him alone, Who created them out of nothing, and who subjected to them all what is in the heavens and the earth, and showered His blessings, both seen and unseen, upon them.

Allah has taken it upon Himself to grant whoever accords Him this right the reward of Paradise.

The Prophet ﷺ once told his companion, Muadh, “Do you know the right of Allah before His servants and the right of His servants before Him?”

Muadh said, “Allah and His Messenger know best.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “It is Allah’s right for His servants exclusively to worship Him and not associate anything else with Him, and it is then the right of servants upon their God that He punishes not those who worship Him and none other than Him”.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Because it relates directly to Allah, to His Divine Names and Attributes, the science of *tawhid*, the Unity of Allah finds itself at the very center of Islamic learning and the most honorable knowledge to be sought. Indeed, Allah called all the prophets to teach the sublime and indivisible Unity of the Creator.

“We sent never a Messenger before you except that We revealed to him that ‘There is no deity but Me; so worship Me.’” (21:25)

Knowledge of *tawhid* is obligatory for every Muslim since the correctness of a person’s religion depends on the correctness of the things he believes in.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Bukhari, (7373).

Allah has forbidden all that worship others than Him from entering Paradise, and will not allow anyone who worships Him alone – even when he may enter Hell - to abide eternally in it.

Therefore, our need for a correct understanding of the absolute oneness of Allah is greater even than our need for food and water.

If losing food and water means the loss of the means of living, losing the knowledge of the oneness of God means the loss of the elements of everlasting happiness in this world and in the next.

Losing the issue of *tawhid* means losing the essence of happiness in this world and in the next to come, and then losing the perfect security of the soul at peace with the One.

For the true guarantee for tomorrow's salvation is worship the Creator alone through His way, without mediators between.

Tawhid is the right of Allah upon you, and Paradise is the promise of Allah for whosoever implements *tawhid*.

The human heart can find no rest except in communion with its Lord, in drawing near to Him and to what pleases Him and in shunning what displeases Him.

There can be no goodness but *tawhid* is its root, and there is no evil, in this world or the next, but *shirk* is its root and no calamity or difficulty, but can be released by *tawhid* and its testimony.

Jonah was saved by the word of *tawhid* (uttering a confirmation) of God's oneness when he called out from the belly of the whale saying,

“There is no god but You, Glory be to You, I have been indeed of those wrongdoers.” (21:87)

Allah also said,
“Had he not been of those who exalt Allah [in remembrance] He would have remained inside its belly until the day they are resurrected.” (37:144)

The Prophet ﷺ was asked: “Is this salvation of that word special for Jonah or it is for every Muslim? He replied, “It is for every Muslim.” (Tabari V. 17 P. 65)

Allah, has made this word *La Ilaha Illallah* (There is no God but Allah) a word of salvation and deliverance from every calamity, a key to Islam in this life, and the key to Paradise tomorrow.

Features of *Tawhid*

There are several important features of *tawhid* that we should discuss here:

The first of these is:

1. *tawhid Al-ruboobia*. This is based firmly in the belief that Allah is the One, the Single Sustainer and Provider, and that He has no partners or associates. It is He who created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain, and none shares divinity with Him.

2. *Tawhid Al-Uloohia*. means to worship Him only whom we believe as One Creator. To believe in the first category only is useless if the second is not applied, in other words, *tawhid Al-ruboobia* must be compared with *Tawhid Al-Uloohiya* (to worship the One).

3. *Tawhid Al-Asmaa Wassifaat*. Means believing in the most beautiful and perfect names and attributes of Allah. False notions about Allah, His names and attributes would lead to the corruption of one's faith and then it will not be beneficial even to believe in one God, such as believing that He needs to take rest or His knowledge is not perfect, such as also this story in the Bible which reads,

“And the Lord spoke to Moses “Speak to the children of Israel.. They shall take for them a lamb.. You shall eat it with your loins girded, and your shoes on your feet, and you shall eat it in haste: For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, and the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the Land of Egypt.” (Exodus 12:1-13)

It is blasphemy in Islam to believe that Allah requested from His servants to make a sign for Him at the door-step in order to identify the inhabitants, whether they are Israelites or Egyptians!

The Merits of *Tawhid*

Tawhid has many merits and virtues:

- It is based on the believing - and then the worshiping – of the One Creator alone apart from any other partner.
 - It is a simple belief, free of complex doctrines and philosophies, untouched by secrets and mysteries. For mystery and guidance are words with two opposite meanings.
- It liberates man from the bondage of *shirk*, from the worship of created things beside Allah to the worship of the One Who created them. Allah said,
“Legislation [ruling] is not but for Allah; He has commanded that you worship none but Him.” (12:40)

Ruler and ruled should both be ruled and governed by the judgement of Allah alone. The first *khalifa*, the first successor to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say, “Obey me in so far as I obey Allah among you, but if I disobey Him, then there is no more obedience to me over you.” (Assunan for Al-Baihaqy V. 6 P. 353)

- It stands constantly and in harmony with the nature of mankind, without contradiction. Nature and the religion of Allah both tighten to *tawhid*, no trinity, no partners with god, no Idols, no mediators, and no innovations.
- It is a stable and solid creed that does not change with the passing of time or the turning over of generations.
- It is a belief supported by unimpeachable proof and evidence to prove that it is always sound and correct, and you may contemplate the following verses from the Qur’an:

“Oh people, an example is given so listen to it. Those you invoke apart from Allah will never create a fly even if they gathered together for [doing] it; and even if a fly should steal a [tiny] thing from them they could not recover it from it. Weak are [both] the seeker and the sought!”
(22:73)

“Had there been gods other than Allah in them [i.e, the heavens and the earth] both would have been ruined; so glory be to Allah, the Lord of the Throne above what they describe.” (21:22)

“The example of those who have taken allies to them apart from Allah, is as the likeness of the spider who takes [construct] a house; and indeed the weakest of houses is the house of the spider, if they but know.”
(29:41)

“Say, ‘Do you see what you invoke besides Allah? If Allah decided to harm me, could they remove His harm from me? Or if He wished me a mercy, could they hold His mercy back?’ Say, “Allah is enough for me upon Whom [alone] rely the dependents.” (39:38)

“Those whom you invoke apart from Allah are servants like you; so call them and let them respond to you, if you are truthful.” (7:194)

“Have they not seen that Allah, Who created the heavens and earth - and did not fail in their creation - is able to give life to the dead? Yes; surely He is powerful over everything.” (46:33)

- *Tawhid* calls us to abandon on following blindly the traditions of parents and ancestors and requires us to think deeply and carefully, to seek the truth with sincerity and determination.

“And thus We never sent a Warner before you [Muhammad] into any town but the wealthy [affluent] ones among them said, “We found our fathers following a way, and we’re seeking the guidance of their footsteps. Then [each warner] said, “What if I brought you a guidance that is than what you found your fathers following?” They said, “We reject what you’ve been sent with.” (43:23-24)

“And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has sent down,’ they say, ‘No; but we follow what we found our fathers doing.’ What if their fathers had no understanding of anything, and if they were not guided? (2:170)

In an other verse:

“What if Satan was calling them (their fathers) to the torment of Hellfire!” (31:21)

■ *Tawhid* is a call to moderation with no excessiveness or extremism. Indeed, religious extremism always has disastrous consequences. Islam steers a middle course between those who insulted the Messiah, scorned him, and finally rejected him, and those who exaggerated their love for him to the point of worshipping him as God. The Messiah was not a liar as the Jews say, and neither was he God and Sustainer as the Christians claim. Jesus is a servant of Allah and a messenger sent by Him.

The Islamic creed is an indivisible whole made up of a series of doctrines, each linked to the other. Denial of any one of these constitutes becomes a denial of all of them. It is useless faith for someone to believe that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, but deny that Moses and Jesus were also Allah’s messengers. It is useless faith for someone who believes that the Qur’an is divinely revealed but deny the revelation of the Torah and the Gospel.⁽⁵¹⁾

⁽⁵¹⁾ The Torah is the Revelation received by Moses. The Pentateuch contains the five books the Jews believe were revealed to Moses. We do not know how much of the revelation received by Moses, if any, has survived in these books. The Gospel is the Revelation received by Jesus. The four Gospels

Christians and Jews believe in part of Allah's revelation and deny other parts. While the Muslim obliges himself to believe in the books that were revealed unto Moses and Jesus, we find neither the Christians nor Jews believe in the Qur'an.

Christians and Jews continue to believe in some of the prophets and reject others. The Jews disbelieve in Jesus and Christians disbelieve in Muhammad. While Christians appeal to the Jews to believe in Jesus, they take a negative action against Muhammad similar to that of the Jews against Jesus, and both agree upon the denial of Muhammad. While Islam appeals to both cults to believe in all books and all messengers.

Christians and Jews will not be appealing to the Muslims to believe in Jesus and Moses, for the Muslim knows that believing in Moses and Jesus is one of the conditions of faith rooted in the belief in Muhammad, and to deny any of the prophets would be a denial of all of them.

Allah said in the Qur'an,
"The people of Noah denied the messengers." (26:105)

We know that Noah's people did not deny all of the messengers, they only denied Noah. But Allah regarded their denial of Noah as a denial of the rest of all the messengers.
Thus Allah says in the Qur'an,

"Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers, and wish to discriminate between Allah and His messengers and say: we believe in some and disbelieve in others, and wish to adopt a way between: those are the disbelievers truly. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment." (4:150)

of the Christians are biographies of Jesus containing some of his teachings. They also include accounts of his birth and death. None of the Gospels are attributed to Jesus and none of them could have been the Gospel referred to in Islamic sources.

Then the focus is immediately shifted to belief and Allah says,

“But for those who believe in Allah and His messengers and do not discriminate between any of them – to those He is going to give their rewards. And Allah is ever Forgiving, most Merciful.” (4:152)

Muslims still continue on calling the Jews and the Christians to believe in the message of Muhammad ﷺ and both communities still refuse to believe in his Prophethood. The attitude of the Muslim will always be, “We make no distinction between one and the other of Allah’s messengers”. While the attitude of the Christians is “ We make distinction between them: Jesus is a prophet but better than all prophets because he is also god, and Muhammad is not a prophet.

And the attitude of the Jews is that Jesus and Muhammad are not prophets.

They deny Muhammad simply because he is the son of Hajar but not Sarah, and because Paul encouraged not to listen to the son of the concubine (slave) woman, but Allah does not make difference between His servants and He chooses whom He pleases for His message.

God is not Racist

The Bible says,

“For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave, and one by a free woman... But what does the scripture say? ‘Cast out the slave and her son; for the son of the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.’ So, brethren we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.” (Galatians 4:22)

Absolute Monotheism the Essence of Islam

Declaring the Oneness of Allah is the first condition for admission to the community of Islam. This is, in itself, sufficient proof of the soundness of this religion, and the emptiness and falsity of other religions.

For there is no other religion but Islam which stipulates such a condition from its believers, and no other religion excludes from its community of faith those who do not proclaim it.

“There is no god but Allah”: is the key to Paradise and of salvation from the torment of Hell. One who comes at the Day of Judgement without this key will find no path to Paradise, even if he had believed in the Prophethood of Muhammad, recited the Qur’an, performed the five daily prayers, fasted the month of *ramadan* and believed in everything else that Muslims believe.

Indeed, Allah has made it clear to us that the good deeds of those who associate others with Him will not be accepted even if that person were a prophet or a messenger.⁽⁵²⁾ Thus Allah told the Prophet Muhammad, as He had told the prophets before him,

“It was 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.’” (39:65-66)

And speaking of the prophets, He said,

“But if they had associated others with Allah, then surely worthless would be whatever they were doing.” (6:88)

• **There is no god but Allah.** This is absolute faith, the foundation of belief in the One God, the essence and the title of Islam, without which belief is impossible. It is the way to a life of fulfillment, the

⁽⁵²⁾ Muslims distinguish between a Prophet, who is chosen by Allah to call his people to the Oneness of God, and to submission to Him alone, and a Messenger, who is also given a revelation. There have been many prophets, but few messengers. Among the messengers of Allah were Moses, David, Jesus and Muhammad, Peace be upon them.

key to happiness and of goodness in this world and the means and secret of salvation in the next.

- **There is no god but Allah.** This is the most absolute of truths and the most noble of them, as the Prophet ﷺ said, “The best thing that I and the prophets before me have ever said is: There is no god but Allah.”⁽⁵³⁾

- **There is no god but Allah.** This is a phrase of liberation which sets humanity free from slavery to created things, from submission and servility to rulers and tyrants, and makes them servants only of the One Who created them.

- **There is no god but Allah.** This means refusing to worship of worshipping anything besides Allah, and to affirm that worship is the right of Allah alone.

- **There is no god but Allah.** This is the slogan of the Oneness of God, which is the spirit of Islam and the essence of belief. Worship has no value before Allah, and no chance of being accepted by Him, if it does not rest upon this foundation. There is no god but Allah.

- **There is no god but Allah.** This was the first thing that all the prophets called their people to.

“And We never sent a Messenger before you except that We revealed to him that, ‘There is no god but Me; so worship Me.’” (21:25)

The denial in this phrase “There is no god” precedes the affirmation “but Allah.” This is because faith in Allah can only come after you have denied false deities that are worshipped instead of Him. Thus Allah says,

“So whoever disbelieves in Taagoot [idols]⁽⁵⁴⁾ and believes in Allah, has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it.” (2:256)

And the Prophet said, “Whoever says, ‘There is no god but Allah’ and denies whatever is worshipped besides Him, his

⁽⁵³⁾ Bukhari, (3579)

⁽⁵⁴⁾ The Arabic original reads *taghut*, which has a much wider meaning than it is possible to give with one word in English. *taghut* is any false object of worship, such as idols, images, or other things that lead to tyranny and to exceeding the limits of decency. Whatever is worshipped beside or alongside Allah is *taghut*, and whoever calls or commands people to worship others beside or alongside Allah is also *taghut*”.

property and his blood are protected and his recompense is with Allah.” (Muslim 32 Book of Faith)

The Conditions Of Testimony

LA ILAHA ILA'LLAH

What does it mean to declare the Oneness of God? Simply saying, “**There is no god but Allah**” without understanding the meaning of these words, and without acting upon them is not enough. Yet sadly, this is the state of many Muslims today who do not observe what Allah has commanded and who do not avoid what He has prohibited. While they fail to perform the five daily prayers, fail to give alms, and fail to avoid bank interest, they assure themselves that by simply saying “There is no God but Allah” they will be saved.

The Prophet’s own people, the Quraish, knew that to say these words meant that they would shoulder an obligation to live and act according to them, and for this reason many of them refused to pronounce them. Indeed, if this were merely a matter of saying a few words they would have said them and saved themselves from the hardship of confrontation that their refusal brought them.

But what are these obligations?

- **Knowledge**, We must seek to know the rights of this Declaration of Faith and what it requires. Allah said, “**Know then, that there is no god but Allah,**” and the Prophet ﷺ said “Whoever dies while knowing that there is no god but Allah, shall surely enter Paradise.” And he said, “Whose last words are ‘There is no god but Allah’ shall surely enter Paradise.” (Ahmad in his musnad 1:65 & Abu Dawood 3116).

Here also we should be aware that it is Allah who strengthens whom He will in uttering that word of truth (*La Ilaha Illallah*) since He knows best who deserve it to be his last word, for He has

said,

“Allah strengthens those who believe with the firm word⁽⁵⁵⁾, in the present life and in the world to come; and

⁽⁵⁵⁾ The firm word is the testimony that there is no deity except Allah, and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. When one utters it as his last word

Allah leads astray the evildoers; and Allah does what He will.” (14:27)

He whose deeds are contradictory to the conditions of his testimony will not be helped by saying it before his death, neither in this life nor in the grave when he will be questioned therein.⁽⁵⁶⁾

• **Certainty** and sureness of the truthfulness of, *La Ilaha Illallah* (There is no god but Allah) without doubt. The Prophet said, “Whoever says There is no god but Allah, with sincerity of heart, with honesty and conviction of both heart and tongue, shall surely enter Paradise.”

• **Acceptance.** That is to accept all its conditions, for the rejection of some of Allah’s law is equal of rejecting all.

• **Sincerity.** This is to pronounce the word *La Ilaha Illallah* (There is no god but Allah) with complete sincerity, that is to be sincere in worshipping Allah, dedicating all acts of worship to Him alone. For whoever says it sincerely from his heart, Allah will guide him to sincere worship. The Prophet ﷺ has said, “The best one among people with the most right to my intercession on the Day of Resurrection is he who said ‘There is no god but Allah’ sincerely from his heart.”⁵⁷

• **Submission.** This is to comply to the conditions of *La Ilaha Illallah* (There is no god but Allah) by the tongue, and to believe it in the heart, and to fulfill its conditions by deeds. As for the hypocrites, they say in their tongues what is different in their hearts.

One should ask of what value is it believe in Allah without submitting to Him!

Whoever professes that there is no god but Allah must then do what Allah has commanded the believers to do and refrain from what He has prohibited. They must obey Allah and not defy His

before death and to give it as an answer to the angels in the grave, this would be a good sign of his salvation.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ See annotation.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Bukhari (6570).

will, and they must put obedience to Allah before obedience to all others; there can be no compliance to disobedience to Allah. As the Prophet ﷺ said, “There is no obedience to any creature that which is disobedient to the Creator.”⁽⁵⁸⁾ The Prophet ﷺ also said, “Whoever seeks Allah’s pleasure despite the indignation of people will earn the pleasure of Allah and the pleasure of the people; and whoever seeks the pleasure of people at the indignation of Allah will earn the displeasure of Allah and the loathing of the people.”⁽⁵⁹⁾

Good works are the fruit of faith and follow naturally from it. Thus Allah always mentions faith and good works together, “*those who believe and do good works.*”

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Imam Ahmad (4:432), *Sahih* according to al-Albani, *Silsilla* p. 179
⁽⁵⁹⁾ al-Qida`i, *Musnad al-Shihab* cf. al-Albani, *Sharh al-Tahawiyyah*, p. 299.

Contradiction Of Faith

Contradiction is a form of denial: some types of contradiction may contradict the whole faith completely, and some may contradict some faith of a person, whose faith then becomes incomplete. A contradiction of faith comes in several forms:

1. **A word of disbelief.** Such as cursing Allah, the Prophet, or Islam, or by deriding religion generally.
2. **An act of disbelief.** Such as prostrating to images and idols, addressing prayers to someone other than Allah, or seeking to be ruled by other than Allah's law.
3. **A dogmatic disbelief.** That is polytheism which contradicts monotheism. This is a tacit denial of faith, such as believing in the existence of another god, or the belief that someone other than Allah can answer our prayers, or that someone other than Allah can release us from calamities, or do us harm, or bring us benefit, or that someone other than Allah has knowledge of the Unseen.⁽⁶⁰⁾
4. **The denial of the Divine Names and Attributes of Allah,**⁽⁶¹⁾ or any part of the Revelation. This too is a denial of faith.
5. **The ignorance and misunderstanding of the important meaning of *La Ilaha Illallah*** (there is no god but Allah) or having contradictory belief to it. Such as believing that it means "nothing exists but Allah," or that it means "there is no creating Lord but

⁽⁶⁰⁾ *al-Ghaib*, the unseen or the unknown. Knowledge which Allah has revealed to no one, such as the time of the Day of Resurrection (*trans*).

⁽⁶¹⁾ *al-'Asma` wa'l-Siffat* - sometimes described as the "names and attributes of Allah." This refers to the ways that Allah has described or named Himself in the revelation (*trans*).

Allah,” or that it means “None had been worshipped but Allah.” This is the belief of those who claim that the worshipping of any idol leads to the Creator, because all creation is one part in the Creator.

The person who believes these things in ignorance is in need of instruction and guidance. In fact, the declaration of faith means that everything that is worshipped beside Allah or instead of Allah is falsehood.

6. The abandonment of *La Ilaha Illallah* (There is no god but Allah). That is to turn away from it, neither uttering it nor fulfilling its necessary conditions, but ignoring completely the obligations. That is failing to pray, to fast, or to pay *zakat*, or not making the pilgrimage even though there is nothing to prevent it. Nevertheless, one who does this will still rely on false wishes and expect that Allah will raise him up to the highest rank of Paradise.
7. **To be loyal to the enemies of Allah.** To put oneself, of one’s own free will, under the protection of disbelievers, to subordinate oneself to them and to express loyalty to them while abandoning the Muslims is a kind of disbelief. Allah has said,

“O you who have believed! Do not make allies of a people with whom Allah has become angry with.” (60:13)

Other forms of loyalty to disbelief are to seek guidance in the governance of public affairs exclusively in something other than what Allah has revealed, and the practice of the occult, including magic and fortune telling.⁽⁶²⁾

8. **Exaggeration in religion.** This is one of the things that leads to the corruption of religious doctrines and to *shirk* (polytheism). Indeed, exaggeration and

⁽⁶²⁾ The first of these, to govern by something other than what Allah has revealed, is to express loyalty to human intellect in preference to the divine wisdom of Allah, the second is to give one's loyalty to the forces of darkness, to ally oneself with the world of the unseen (*trans*).

religious extremism are major sources of every *fitnah*,⁽⁶³⁾ and every deviation from the straight path.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Keep away from exaggeration in religion, for certainly those who came before you were destroyed by exaggeration in religion,”⁽⁶⁴⁾ and he said, “Do not make wild claims about me, as they did about (Jesus) the son of Mary. I am only a servant of Allah, so say ‘Allah’s servant and His Messenger.’”⁽⁶⁵⁾

⁽⁶³⁾ The word *fitnah* is used for different meanings.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Al-Nasa’i, *Kitab al-Hajj*, 5:268.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Bukhari, 6: 478.

The Signs of True Devotion (monotheism)

Among the signs of true monotheism are the following:

1. Sincere devotion to Allah: That is to devote your words, your deeds, and all of your strivings for the sake of Allah alone and for His pleasure, hoping and longing for the rewards He has promised, and fearing His punishment. Giving no regard for worldly benefit, fame, or the praise of others or any other kind of showing off or *shirk* that can wipe away a person's good deeds.

Allah said,

“And they were not commanded except to worship Allah [being] sincere to Him in religion.” (97:5).

Just as what the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah does not accept among the acts [of devotion] except those which are sincerely done to seek thereby Allah's pleasure.”

Therefore, devotee worship *tawhid al-ibadah* is built upon sincerity.

An act of devotion can be correctly performed but be misdirected, it may lack a correct intention by not being sincerely directed toward Allah.

As a result, the false intention spoils the good deed until it becomes ugliness.

2. Judging oneself by the Law of Allah. That is to say, the sincere believer refers all things to what Allah has revealed, and takes Allah's revelation, and His law as his guide throughout his life, as the fundamental principles by which he judges all things, whether they relate to the affairs of this world or the next.

Allah said,

“And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, those are truly the disbelievers, (wrongdoers, unjust), (defiantly disobedient).” (5:44-46)

In other words, we are to give precedence to Allah's authority, rather than to the authority of positive laws that people have imposed upon themselves, and which they are modifying every time because of its inconsistency with man's demand.

But as for Allah, it is He Who created, and it is He Who knows best what is best for its affairs. He created mankind and knows better than they what is best for them in their spiritual and material lives. Allah said,

“Does He not know what those whom He created? And He is the Subtle, the Aware.” (67:14)

And He said

“The decision (of ruling and legislating is the right of none but) to Allah.” (12:40),

and He said,

“Is it the judgement of *jahiliyah* [the time of ignorance] that they are seeking? But who is better judgement other than [the judgement of] Allah for a people who belief?” (5:50)

Allah has permitted the lawful and prohibited the unlawful, and there is no other way to know the lawful and the unlawful except by way of Allah’s revelation to His Messenger. We can know it through the text of the Quran and the *sunnah*, or through the rules that are derived from these texts of these two sources.

Whoever seeks other way than Allah’s way, permitting what Allah has prohibited, or prohibiting what Allah has permitted, will have assigned a partner to Allah, as lawgiver, and will have sought some other law. Allah said,

“Or have they partners [other than Allah] who made lawful for them (matters) in religion that which has not allowed?” (42:21)

Shirk of obedience to those who Disobey Allah

One of the types of *shirk* that the Jews and the Christians fell in before is that,

“They have taken as lords beside Allah their rabbis and their monks.” (9:31)

This verse astonished one of the Companions, ‘Adi bin Haatim, after he had accepted Islam. He had formerly been a Christian. He said, “O Messenger of Allah, we did not used to

worship them.” The Prophet ﷺ said “Didn’t they permit what is unlawful and prohibit the lawful and you followed them?” He said,

“Yes.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Doing that was to worship them.” And in another narration, “They were not worshiping them, but whenever they permitted something they used to obey them in permitting it, and when they prohibited something, all prohibited it.”⁶⁶

3. **Love of Allah** this requires that we precede our love to Him above all other things, and that we give precedence to what He wants above what his creatures want and desire for themselves.

Allah said,
“And among people are some who take apart from rivals, they love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who believed are stronger in love to Allah” (2:165).

Our love for Allah must exceed our love for property, families, and for our parents.

Allah is true, and His way is the way of truth. How then could we possibly struggle and strive for maintaining the truth and resisting the evil if our love to the worldly things exceed that of Allah? How could we possibly make *Jihad* that may result the loss of our properties or even our souls? No one will give his soul for Allah if he loves it more than Him.

This verse denounced those, whose love for something other than Allah is like their love for Allah. How then would it be for someone who loves these things more than they love Allah? Allah said,

“Say: If your fathers, and your sons, and your brethern, and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth that you acquire, and merchandise for which you fear to lose, and dwellings you desire, are dearer to you than Allah and His messenger and striving in His way: then wait till Allah brings His command to pass, for Allah guides not the defiantly disobedient.” (9:24).

⁶⁶ [al-Tirmidhi 3094. Its *isnad* is classed as *hassan*].

The Prophet ﷺ said, “When you do business in *eenah*⁽⁶⁷⁾ [forbidden trade], and hoard up livestock, and become content sitting in your green fields , and abandon *jihad* in the way of Allah, then Allah will send you humiliation that will not be lifted until you return to your religion.”⁽⁶⁸⁾ .

Faith is not complete until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is more dear to a believer than his parents, and his children and indeed, all people, and not until he loves what Allah and His Messenger love: and until the believer loves his fellow believer, loving him for nothing but for the sake of Allah.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Doing business in forbidden ways. This is to sell goods to someone for a specific price while setting a time in the future for delivery, then buying back the same goods for a lower price before delivery. It is as kind of *riba*.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Abu Daud 3462, its *isnad* is *sahih*

The signs of true love

Among the signs of true devotion to Allah are that the hearts should be bound to its Creator. When it becomes so, then the true lover of Allah will become like the following:

1. He loves his God more than wealth, wife, children, and even more than his own soul. For how can one wish to die for the sake of Allah while his soul is dearer to him than Allah? How can one abandon his wealth and property to die for Allah when they are more beloved to him than Allah? How can he disobey his desire when it is more beloved to him than Allah?
2. He loves others only for the sake of Allah and for His pleasure, and is angered only for the sake of Allah.
3. He does not do any thing except what pleases Him.
4. He avoids what brings His wrath.
5. He depends upon none except Him.
6. He fears nothing but Him.
7. He addresses his prayers to none other than Him, and calls upon none but Him.
8. He submits himself only to Him.

- **To fear Allah alone.** Among the best worshippers of Allah, and the nearest to Him are those who fear Allah most:

“To Allah prostrates whatever is in the heavens, and whatever is on the earth of creatures, and the angels [as well] and They are not arrogant. They fear they their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded.” (16:49-50)

Just as Allah has said:

“Those who fear their Lord in the Unseen [i.e even though they do not see Him] to them await forgiveness and a great reward.” (67:12)

Allah has forbidden people to fear others except Allah. Allah says, ***“So fear not men, but fear Me.”*** (5:44) And He reproached people who, after having asked for His support against their enemies, turned away

“They fear people as they fear Allah, or even greater fear.” (4:77)

And Allah said to them,

“Do you fear them? but Allah has more right that you should fear Him, if you are [truly] believers.” (9:13)

- **To depend on Allah alone** is to have confidence in Allah and to rely upon Him in all things. It means to leave the outcome of our affairs to Him and to seek His assistance taking in consideration the reasons that lead, by Allah’s infinite wisdom, to the goal, just as Allah said:

“To Allah belong the Unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth and to Him will be returned the matter all of it, so worship Him, and rely upon Him.” (11:123)

Similarly Allah has said,

“Say: ‘Allah is enough for me; in Him all the trusting put their trust.’ (39:38)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, “If you truly put your trust in Allah, He will provide for you as He provides for the birds that go out in the morning on an empty stomach and come back heavy bellied.”⁽⁶⁹⁾

- **To turn to Him in repentance**, as Allah has said:
“And return [in repentance] unto your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you suddenly, and then you will not be helped,” (39:54).

This means to turn to Allah always, not only in times of hardship, but also in times of ease, as Allah has said:

“And when adversity touches man, he calls upon his Lord, turning to Him [alone]; then when He bestows upon him a favor from Himself, he forgets Him whom he called upon before, and makes he attributes to Allah equals to mislead (people) from His way. Say, “Enjoy your disbelief for a little, indeed, you are of the companions of the Fire.” (39:8)

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Ahmad, 1:33; Termidhi, (3345).

- **To submit to Him and to seek ruling by His law** as He said:

“No, but by your Lord, they will not believe until they make you [O Mohammad] 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 submission.” (4:65).

And He said:

“Certainly 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.” (24:51)

- **To hear and to obey.** The Muslim should obey the Divine commandments, as the soldier obeys his commander's orders in the midst of a battle, following them precisely and without hesitation or rejection. The Muslim should not be like those whose tongues said “We hear and we obey” but whose acts said “We hear and we disobey” and revealed the emptiness of their words, as was the case with the Israelites before. The Almighty has said:

“O you who have believed, obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not turn away from Him while you hear [His order]; and do be like those who said, ‘We hear,’ while they do not hear.” (8:20-21)

- **To supplicate to Allah alone.** True love for Allah means to call on Him and to entreat Him both in ease and in hardship:

“And your Lord said, ‘Call on me, and I will respond to you. Indeed, those who arrogantly disdain my worship Me, will enter Hell lowly.’”
(40:60)

And He said:

“And when My servants ask you [Mohammad], concerning Me - I am indeed near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls on Me. So let them respond to Me and believe in Me so that they may be rightly guided.” (2:186)

As for those who turn to Allah only in times of difficulty, and then turn away when Allah releases their difficulty, these are not among the sincere worshippers of Allah. Allah said:

“When We grant man a favor, he turns away and distances himself by his side, but when harm touches him, he is full of extensive supplication [prayer].” (41:51)

And He said,

“And when any trouble touches man, he calls upon Us, whether lying on his side, or sitting or standing; but when We remove his trouble from him, he goes on back [to his sins and turns away] as if he had not invoked Us for a trouble that touched him.” (10:12). And He said:

“So when they board a ship, they supplicate Allah, making their religion [faith] sincere to Him, but when He delivers them to the land, then they start associating others with Him.” (29:65)

Calling on Allah is a form of worship: it is not fitting for anyone to raise up his hands and then call for divine intervention other than from Him alone. When Islam ordered worship should be to Allah, it maintained that calling upon Allah (prayers) is an essential and main worship that should not be addressed to others but Him. This is the most important part of worship. Thus Allah has said:

“So invoke Allah, making your religion sincere to Him, even if the unbelievers hated it.” (40:14)

Whoever contemplates the Qur'an will find its verses dealing with the subject of polytheism, criticizing pagans for addressing their prayers to false gods. Allah said,

“Say, Invoke those whom you have claimed besides Allah. They do not possess an atom's weight [of ability] in

the heavens or on the earth, neither they have therein any partnership, nor there is for Him from them any assistant.” (34:22)

He also said,
“Say, ***‘Call upon those you claimed [as gods] besides Him. They do owe nothing to save you from your trouble or to change it.’*** (17:56)

He also said,
“Those on whom you call apart from Allah, are servants like you; so call on them, and let them answer you if you speak truly,” (7:194).

He also said,
“If you call them they will not hear your supplication, and even if they heard, they would not respond to you; and on the Day of Resurrection they will deny your partnership.”⁽⁷⁰⁾ (35:14)

He also said,
“And who is more astray than he who invokes apart from [or besides] Allah, someone that who will never respond to him till the Day of resurrection, and who is unaware of their call? And when people are gathered, they [who were invoked with Allah] will be enemies to them, and they will be deniers of their worship to them.” (46:5)

- To supplicate others besides Allah is the same as worshipping them. Allah said,

“Say: ‘I am forbidden to worship those whom you invoke besides apart from Allah,’” (6:56).

And Abraham said to his people,
“And I will leave you and those you invoke besides Allah, and I will invoke my Lord.” (19:48)

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Many righteous people will find out after the Day of Resurrection that their graves were taken as places of worship when they were dead, being unaware of the partnership given to them with Allah by the people. Those will be arguing with their worshippers and denying any responsibility or permission given by them for this *shirk*.

Then Allah considered this call to them with Him a matter of worship, saying:

“So when he left them, and what they worshipped besides Allah, We granted him Isaac and Jacob, and each [of them] We made a prophet.” (19:49)

So Allah made it clear that to call on other deities instead of calling Him is a form of worship to them, (which is *shirk*.) They do worship Allah but they do not worship Him alone.

Our Prophet ﷺ taught us that “Supplication is worship”⁽⁷¹⁾ and he said, “I call you to Allah alone, the One who relieves you of difficulties when they beset you; He who answers your call when you are lost in a barren land; and He who, when thirstiness overcomes you and you call upon Him, quenches your thirst.”⁽⁷²⁾

And the Prophet ﷺ, also said to Ibn Abbas when he was a young boy, “Oh boy, if you ask, ask Allah; and if you seek help, seek it from Allah.”⁽⁷³⁾

- **Continuous remembrance to Allah.**

The fact about remembrance is to “Hold the memory of the remembered one in the heart.” Remembrance of Allah is the best kind of all worship; for the other kinds of worship were not ordained but to enable the person to remember Allah.”⁽⁷⁴⁾

While people remember always what their minds are busy with, then the believer remembers always His Lord because he is always busy with the remembrance of Allah and the Last Day. He always remembers his appointment with the moment that transfers him to another house in another world, for this world is nothing but a staging post on the road to our final destination. Almighty Allah says,

“I am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him when ever he remembers Me. If he mentions of Me in himself, I mention him in Myself; and if he mentions Me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly better than his. And if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to

⁽⁷¹⁾ Abu Daud (1479) and Termidhi (3244); *Sahih*.

⁽⁷²⁾ Imam Ahmad (5:64); *Sahih*.

⁽⁷³⁾ Termidhi (2518) *Sahih*; Imam Ahmad (1:293,302).

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Khalil al-Harraas, *Da`wat al-Tawhid*, p. 50.

him a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running” ⁽⁷⁵⁾

Submissiveness of one’s heart toward Allah and binding oneself to Him in fear of His punishment and longing for His mercy, and seeking salvation from Him only.

Allah said,

“The believers are indeed those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fell fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and on their Lord they rely. Those who establish prayer and spend from what We have provided them, Those are indeed the believers. For them are degrees [of high position] with their Lord, and forgiveness and a noble provision.” (8:2-4)

And He said,

“Only those believe in Our verses are those who, when they are reminded by them, they fall down in prostration, and exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord, and they are not arrogant. Their side parts shun their beds [in night prayer], calling on their Lord in fear and hope; and they spend from that We have provided them.”
(32:15)

There is a beautiful *du`a* (supplication) that gathers all these meanings together, which the Prophet ﷺ used to recite as he stood late at night in prayer:

“My Lord, I have submitted myself to You, and in You I have believed, and upon You I have relied, and I have reproached others for Your sake. If I contend with others it is for You. By Your Law I judge. So forgive me what I have done before, and what I will be doing after, and what I have done secretly and what I have done publicly.”

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Bukhari (7505), Muslim (2675), Termidhi (3598).

THE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Islamic faith rests upon a foundation of belief. This foundation is made up of a belief in Allah, in His angels, in His Books, in His messengers and in the Last Day. Allah has said in the Quran:

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces towards the East or the West. But righteousness is in one who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book and the Prophets, and gives wealth in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler [the wayfarer], and to those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves, [and who] establishes prayer, and pays the charity, And those who fulfill their promise when they make a promise, and the patient one in poverty and hardship and hard time [in battles]; Those are the ones who [proved they] are true, and those are the Godfearing ones.” (2:177)

The angel Gabriel asked the Prophet several questions about the foundations of belief and the various stages of faith. Among other things, the angel asked him,

“Tell me about Islam (submission).” The Prophet replied that

Islam is “to bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah, to establish the prayer, to pay *zakat* (charity), to fast the month of ramadan, and for whoever has the means to do so, to perform the Pilgrimage to the House of Allah.” Then the angel asked him,

“Tell me about Iman (faith).” The Prophet said, “Faith is to

believe in Allah and His angels, and His Books, and His messengers, and in the Last Day, and the destiny - the good of it and the evil of it.” Finally, the angel asked him,

“Tell me about Ihsan (the highest status of worship).” The Prophet said, “*Ihsan* is worshipping Allah as if you see Him, but if you do not see Him, [to know that] He sees you.”⁽⁷⁶⁾

⁽⁷⁶⁾Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, hadith no. 8.

The Concept of Islam

In the language of the Arabs, the word “Islam” is a qualifier, which signifies “submission” and “deference” to Allah by means of obedience to His will. It means to observe what He has commanded and what He has forbidden. Therefore, whoever submits himself to the commands and prohibitions of Allah deserves to be described as Muslim. As for someone who turns his back on Allah’s Religion yet claims the name “Muslim,” submission to Allah entails more than a simple declaration of belonging. One cannot be considered a Muslim until he has indeed submitted to the divine will of Allah.

The story of Abraham and Ishmael:

a lesson of submission and surrender

In the story of Abraham and his son Ishmael, upon whom both be peace, we find the most inspiring example of submission and surrender to the divine will of Allah. Here we find Abraham saying,

“Oh my son, I have seen in the dream that I [must] sacrifice you, so see what you think.”

The dreams of the prophets are in fact revelation. Ishmael was not displeased with Allah’s command. Rather he appeared in the highest spirit of submission and surrender to the command of Allah, and immediately said to his father,

“Oh my father, do as you are commanded to do, you will find me, by the will of Allah, among those patient ones.”

Both submitted themselves to the command of Allah. Abraham is now about to slay his son, and the son is offering his neck to be slain in full obedience and complete submission to the Divine will.

Therefore Allah said,

“And when they submitted, (aslamaa), and he had laid him down on his forehead.”

A voice rang out from high saying,

*“Oh, Ibrahim, you have confirmed the vision,”
and We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. This*

was indeed a clear test, and Abraham was ransomed with a mighty sacrifice.” (37:102-107)

Islam is not a mere meaningless title; it is rather a quality that means submission and surrender to the command of Allah. It is self-surrender to the divine will of Allah. People (among them Muslims) fail to consider the meaning of these words of Allah (*falamma aslamaa*) thinking that the verse means “and when both of them decided to choose the Islamic religion.”

The real meaning is “when they submitted themselves completely and sincerely to Allah.” The father was ready to lose his own son, and the son was ready to lose his own life, as Allah had commanded the sacrifice.

Do Muslims today have this level of commitment in their religion? Do they really have this kind of submission (*Islam*) that Abraham and his son had?

When Islam has become an official religion registered only on Muslims identification cards, while it has no existence in actual behavior. Allah troubled them by setting up leaders against them who declared Islam as “an official religion of the state,” but who quietly ignored all of its laws and teachings.

Those leaders deceive their people by the slogan “Islam is the official religion of the state” while the same people used to deceive Allah with the same slogan “Islam is our official religion”. In fact they are deceiving none but themselves while they do not heed it.

And so the joke is on them. They do not practice Islam, so their leaders do not practice it either.

Belief in the Oneness of Allah

Belief in the Oneness of Allah, or more technically, the public declaration of one’s belief in the Divine Unity of Allah, is the first thing a person must do in order to become a Muslim. This declaration is, in itself, sufficient proof of the correctness of one’s new faith and of the rejection of whatever beliefs one may have formerly held. There is no other religion that either imposes this

requirement, or which refuses to recognize a person who does fulfill this requirement as belonging to it.

This declaration of the Oneness of Allah is the key to Paradise and the secret passage out of the fires of Hell. Whoever comes on the Day of Judgment without this key will not escape from punishment in Hell, nor will he ever enter Paradise, even though he may have believed in the prophethood of Mohammad, read the Quran, prayed and fasted and believed in everything else that Muslims believe in.

This is sufficient explanation of the meaning of the Oneness of Allah for the purposes of our discussion here.

Belief that Mohammad is His Messenger

All Muslims believed that Mohammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah.

But how many of them really understand what this in fact means?

How many of us take care to follow his example by sticking close to his way (*sunnah*) and practicing what has been reliably passed down to us, and leaving aside weak, flawed and fabricated accounts?

How many of us follow his life-example and adopt him as a role-model in our own lives?

This prophet's ﷺ way is a difficult and burdensome task to many among those who declare and witness that he is the Prophet. What does this declaration really mean? What does it require us to do? How can we insure that our declaration that Mohammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah has real actual meaning in our lives?

The conditions of belief in Mohammad's Prophethood

Our belief in the Prophethood of Mohammad ﷺ involves us in several obligations.

First, we must believe beyond all doubt that Almighty Allah sent Mohammad ﷺ as a messenger.

Second, we must not make any distinctions between him and any other of Allah's messengers.

Third, we must believe that the Prophet ﷺ had delivered what Allah ordered him to convey. He witnessed it, and his companions too witnessed it when he said to them in his last days, "Did not I convey it?" "Yes you did" they replied. He then said, "Oh Allah, be witness".

Fourth, we must not believe that the Prophet ﷺ was in any way more than a human being, that he was created from light, that he was created before Adam, that he was created before the heavens and the earth, or that Allah, Glorious and Mighty is He, created the heavens and the earth for his sake. Muslims believe that Mohammad was a human being, descended from Adam as all people are, and that he was chosen by Allah to be a Prophet and to be a Messenger, the bearer of a Book. This is what Allah says in the Quran, "*Mohammad is nothing but a Messenger, many messengers have come before him.*" (3:144)

Fifth, we believe that the Prophet ﷺ has no knowledge of the unseen. But what he knows is what Allah has revealed to him. What was revealed to him cannot be considered to be hidden, neither from him after its revelation nor from us after he had conveyed it to us. Allah commanded him to say, and we should know that he had no power to benefit himself, nor to cause harm, except as Allah should will, as in the case of miracles.

“Say, ‘I have nothing to give myself any benefit or harm, except what Allah wills. And if I have the knowledge of the unseen, I would have acquired more wealth [good], and no harm would have touched me. I am only a Warner and a bringer of good news to people who believe.’”
(7:188)

He used to say, “Do not exaggerate about me like the Christians exaggerated about the Messiah, the son of Mary. Rather say, ‘He (Mohammad) is the servant of Allah and His Messenger.’ I do not like people to raise me up above the station which Allah has given me.”⁽⁷⁷⁾

When some people began to praise him excessively saying, “Our Prophet knows what will happen tomorrow,” he warned them against saying such things lest the devil take the opportunity to exaggerate and corrupt their faith.

Sixth, we should obey all the Prophet's $\text{\textcircled{E}}$ commands and desist from everything that he forbade, because obedience to him is obedience to Allah, as disobedience to him is disobedience to Allah. Allah said,

“He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah.” (4:80)
And He said,

“Whatever the Messenger has given you- take, and whatever he has forbidden you, refrain from.”

(59:7)

And He said,

“And if you love Allah then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.” (3:31)

So the obedience to the Prophet $\text{\textcircled{E}}$ leads to the loving of Allah and His forgiveness, and guidance, as Allah says, ***“And if you obey him, you will be guided.”*** (24:54)

Finally, we should love the Prophet $\text{\textcircled{E}}$ more than anything else, more than our property, more than our children, more than ourselves, as he told us, “None of you has loved me truly until I'm more dear to him than his son, than his father, and than all

⁽⁷⁷⁾Bukhari hadith no. 3445.

people.”⁽⁷⁸⁾ For if you love yourself more than him, then how could you sacrifice your life for the principles he came to accomplish?

Summary

Sincere belief in the Prophethood of Mohammad ﷺ should lead us to:

Obey whatever he has commanded us to do.

Believe whatever he has told us.

Desist from whatever he has forbidden us.

Refrain from worshipping Allah in any way other than the way he taught us.

The signs of true love for the Prophet ﷺ

Those who truly love the Prophet ﷺ will be careful to follow his *sunnah* absolutely in every way. They will do everything that he commanded them to do and will avoid everything that he forbade without adding anything to any of this. Anyone who adds to the Prophet’s *sunnah* is not sincere in his love for him.

Those who truly love the Prophet ﷺ will not neglect to pray for Allah’s blessings on him whenever his name is mentioned. Allah said,

“*Oh you who believe, pray* [unto Allah or ask Him to confer] *blessing upon him, and pray* [for Allah] *to grant Him peace.*” (33:56).

True believers will accept easily and naturally whatever the Prophet ﷺ taught us.

Finally, they will take him as an example to follow in all of their affairs, as Allah has said,

“*You have an excellent pattern in the Messenger of Allah,* [an example to follow] *for he who hopes Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often.*” (33:21)

⁽⁷⁸⁾Bukhari hadith no 15.

The World BEFORE Mohammad's Prophethood

Before the appearance of the final Prophet & the earth was rife with oppression and great ignorance, bloodshed and brigandry, joining partners with the Creator, devotion to graven images, and killing female children, abandoning the way of Abraham in religion. People were between:

- Idolatry: in which pagans fashioned idols with their own hands and then worshiped them, offering devotion to what their own hands had made.

- A Christianity which divided God up into three forms: the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, adding to Him the worship of man (Jesus) and angel (Holy spirit), attributing to God human nature, and attributing to man divine nature; then saying, these are One. And then they made their holy men into Lords over mankind, set up intermediaries between themselves and the Deity whom they claimed was created and Creator, man and God at the same time.

The Messiah was a man, who came to guide people to worship God, but suddenly he became to a group of them god himself, who came down on earth in the form of a man: eating, drinking, sleeping, seeking to flee from the plots of his enemies, seeking help from his God, until he was captured and put to death. And even after this, he is God!

- A crafty and sly Judaism which wrought havoc on earth, identifying as enemies anyone who was not a Jew, and moving to sow strife and discord among all the nations of the earth. The Jews justified this with the claim that they were the mothers of all humanity or the chosen holy people of God, and that other nations were like cattle given to them by God to do with them what they please. They broke all their covenants with Allah, twisted and distorted all His revelations, and murdered His messengers to them, and yet they do not hesitate to remind us of the great number of God's messengers sent to them. They have many books, which their religious leaders have distorted according to their whims and their tastes, changing the lawful into the unlawful and changing the unlawful into the lawful.

- A Magianism, which believed in two gods, a god of goodness and a god of evil. The followers of this faith worshipped fire.
- A Sabeanism, which worshiped the planets and the stars, and believed that Allah incarnated them, and manifested in them and that these planets could affect their lives. These people feared the anger of the stars and hoped to earn their pleasure.
- A *Duhriah*, servants of life which denied all revelations and disbelieved in the rising of the dead and the Day of Judgment. These are the servants of life, who said, ***“There is nothing but our worldly life. We die and live, and nothing destroys us except time.”*** (45:24)

Thus the world was brought to the point where the light of the Prophethood was extinguished and the teaching of the prophets were vanished and mixed with the words of those liars and tyrants, and the minions of Satan replaced the Revelation given to them, until mankind was cast adrift in a sea of idolatry and ignorance.

And so it remained until the light of the Prophethood was rekindled by the coming of the Seal of all prophets, the bearer of the Final Revelation to mankind. Thus Allah saved mankind from falsehood and replaced their ignorance with knowledge, cleansing them of all pollution, of the soul and of the body. Allah said,

“Allah was conferred [great] favor to the believers when He raised among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, though they were before that in manifest error”. (3:164)

He saved them from idolatry and the worship of created things, and returned them to the religion of Prophet Abraham. Allah says, ***“Those whom you call upon apart from Allah, are servants like you; so call on them, and let them respond to you, if you speak truly.”*** (7:194)

He returned them to the nation of Abraham and to the doctrine of pure monotheism: The worshiping of the One Lord alone.

He saved the infant girl from the crime of murder, the unwanted girl who had formerly been buried alive, as Allah says:

“And they attribute daughters to Allah. Exalted is He! And for themselves is what they desire [sons]. But when one of them gets the news of [the birth of] a female, his face becomes dark, and he suppresses grief [and shame]. He hides himself from the people for the bad news he was informed. Should he keep it in shame or bury it in the dust? Evil is what they decide!” (16:58-59)

He cleansed society of the discrimination and injustice of men who measured their worth by their ancestry, and their race, and the honor of their fathers, and he said “abandon it, for it is malodorous.” (Muslim 2584)
Allah pointed this out by saying,

“O Mankind, we have created you from male and female, and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. The noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most Godfearing (righteous) among you. For Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (49:13)

Mankind was freed from the worship of mankind to the worship of the Creator of mankind, freed from being slaves to their own desire and to the traditions of their fathers. He freed them from the distortions of soothsayers and shamans, whose lies lay exposed and against whom all humanity had been warned.

They only called people to despair and loss of faith. And he pronounced slaves to be the brothers of their masters when he said, “Your brothers are the servants whom Allah has placed under your authority. Whoever’s brother is under his authority, then let him feed him from what he eats, and clothe him as he clothes himself, and not let him work what he cannot do, but if he asks him to do

what he cannot do, then he should help him do it.”⁽⁷⁹⁾. The last words that the Prophet Mohammad ﷺ said before his death were “keep the prayer, keep the prayer, fear Allah for those who are under your authority.”

When he saw one of his companions beating up his slave, the Prophet ﷺ said to him, “Be ware that Allah is more powerful against you than your power against your slave.” The man immediately said “O Prophet, he is free for the sake of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Had you not done it the flame of Hell would have touched you.” (Muslim 1659)

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Abu Daud (5157), its chain of transmission is *Sahih*.

The Special Qualities of the Prophethood of Mohammad ﷺ

The Prophet Mohammad ﷺ explained the qualities which distinguished his prophethood from those of his brothers, the prophets who came before him, saying, “I have been given eloquence and precision of speech⁽⁸⁰⁾ and supporting me by the frightening of my enemy even a month before my arrival to them. I have been permitted to eat sacrificial meat, which had not been permitted to anyone before.⁽⁸¹⁾ The earth has been made for me a place of prostration and means of purification: so anyone from among my nation may pray where he stands when the time for prayer is nigh, and when water is not found for purification, the dust of the earth is pure for us. While the former prophets were sent to their own nations, I was sent to all creation and to all races. I was given the right of intercession⁽⁸²⁾ and appointed seal of all the prophets.⁽⁸³⁾ And while all of the prophets before me were sent with miracles to convince the people to believe, I was sent with the Revelation of Allah,⁽⁸⁴⁾ and so I pray that my followers will be the largest of nations on the Day of Resurrection.”⁽⁸⁵⁾

⁽⁸⁰⁾ *Jawami' al-kalim*, to speak with miraculous conciseness and depth of meaning.

⁽⁸¹⁾ Sacrificial meat had previously been immolated and not eaten.

⁽⁸²⁾ This is the Grand Intercession on the Day when all souls are gathered, although others of the prophets and the righteous will be given the right of intercession at another time.

⁽⁸³⁾ That is to say that he is the last of prophets and messengers.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ The miracles of the prophets were not in the form of a Revelation. Musa was given his staff and he parted the sea, Saleh was given the she-camel and Jesus was born of a virgin. None of the revealed books formed part of a miracle other than the Quran, in which Allah challenges humanity and the Jinn to try to produce its like or even one *surah* like those it contains.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ This was reported by Bukhari (438) and Muslim (521).

The Establishment of the Prayer

We have already seen that the first pillar of Islam is to declare that there is no god but Allah and that this ultimately means that Allah is publicly and privately the One and Unique object of worship and devotion. While this is a verbal declaration, it must also be backed up by action and by deeds.

Then we have the second pillar of Islam, the prayer, in which we have an act by which to measure the sincerity of one's declaration of faith and which is an actual practice. Whoever witnesses that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and gives no worship to Him, will find that his declaration has become a witness against him on the Day of Resurrection and his declaration itself will have been proven to be an act of false witness. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, abandonment of the prayer takes a man into disbelief and *shirk*."⁽⁸⁶⁾

Prayer is the meal of the heart

Prayer is the meal that the heart needs. Our body needs three meals a day, but our heart and soul need five spiritual meals to remain sound and close to Its Creator, and to be purified from active temptations and from the whisperingS of Satan.

What is the value of the five prayers?

The repetition of the prayer five times in A day and in the night prevents the heart from wandering too far from Allah and gives us a sound relationship with Him.

Perhaps a person has fallen into temptation, and begins to repeat his act of disobedience, but the time for prayer rolls around and he hears the call to prayer and he finds himself standing before his Lord and his Savior and is unable to do anything, but to repent and seek forgiveness for the wrongdoing he haS committed. And so he hastens from wrongdoing to repentance and seeks forgiveness and resolves not to return to his wrongdoing, even before he begins his prayer. Had it not been for prayer, he would have gone deeper into wrongdoing, which would have taken him

⁽⁸⁶⁾ Transmitted by Muslim.

even farther from Allah. Perhaps this is the significance of Allah's words when he says,

“And perform the prayer; for surely prayer forbids indecency and dishonor.” (45:29)

Prayer is the greatest symbol of unity among the Muslims. It is the leveler of the rich and the poor, the highborn and the commoner, joining them in a single rank. There is no special place in the mosque for any special class of person. All people there are equally poor and destitute, standing with full humbleness and fearfulness, trembling before the Almighty, glory be to Him.

The prayer is a special form of worship. For anyone's prayer to be valid and acceptable there are certain conditions which must be fulfilled and certain acts which must be performed which we know about from the Prophet's *Ḥ sunnah*. Its key is the purity of body and clothing. Its spirit is humility, weariness, fearfulness, and the feeling of the greatest sweetness when talking to the Creator.

Therefore, prayer is not only to turn the body toward Makkah, but to turn the heart towards Allah. Prayer is not merely a nodding of the head and bowing down of the body and its prostration. Rather it is a movement of the heart and an awakening in it of the feelings of security, peacefulness, and contentment and awe of the Creator.

Unlike what people think, the heart acts not only upon the body, and the actions of the heart are the fearing of Allah and the hope, love and the surrendering to Him. The real submission is the submission of the heart not the body.

The point is not merely to perform the prayer, but whether Allah has accepted it or not. Allah is good and accepts only what is good. Nothing ascends to Him except good. So do not say, “I have prayed,” but rather ask yourself, “Has Allah accepted my prayer from me?”

Much benefit is to be gained from the Prophet's words, “Pray as you have seen me praying.” It is essential that we follow his way of fearfulness when he prayed, and make our hearts humble in prayer, as his was humbled. We must not limit our prayer to

following his example only in the way he stood and bowed and prostrated. Allah has said,

“The believers have succeeded, those, who are full of fear [from Allah] in their prayer.” (23:1-2)

Their humility in prayer is an indication of their prosperity and that they have been greatly blessed. Allah has also said,

“And perform the prayer; for prayer [indeed] forbids immorality and wrongdoing.” (29:45)

The Prophet ﷺ was extremely humble and often wept in prayer. Indeed, when he prayed, a gentle sobbing could be heard from him like the simmering of a pot on the hob.

Paying Zakat (charity)

The paying of *zakat* to the poor as a pillar is a sign of the truthfulness of Islam. Islam prohibits *riba* (usury), and prescribes charity and makes it incumbent upon every person (whether a revert or a born Muslim) to give something of what Allah has given him to the needy and the poor. This is a financial and social solution.

By these high and eminent teachings, divine guidance dissolves the enmity between the rich and the poor as the one gives to his brother what Allah has obliged him to give of his wealth. He will often give more and seek by this act of worship to draw himself nearer to Allah, knowing that whatever one gives in this world will return to him on the Day of Rising doubled and redoubled.

The Prophet ﷺ taught us that “The act of charity prevents the worst kinds of death, calms the anger of the Lord, and extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire.”⁸⁷

It shields its giver from the searing heat of Hell. How much in need of this divine teaching is man, locked into conflict between the rich and the poor time out of mind?

Piety and the fruits of what we give cannot reach us until we give from the goodness of our hearts. This is what Allah says:

“You will not attain righteousness until you spend of what you love.” (3:92)

Gaining righteousness and piety is higher and more precious than the wealth one gives to others. The companions were spending their wealth hoping to attain this reward such as Abu Talhah who decided to give his most valuable garden for the sake of Allah after hearing this verse.

⁸⁷ (Tirmidhi 2619).

Money and property are among the most splendid of life's ornaments that hearts are attached to, which results in anxiety, jealousy of one's brother and enmity towards him, and ultimately in the spilling of one's brother's blood lies the love of wealth.

Here also lies the source of Islam's concern for the heart, for curing it of greed and for purging it of its maladies, and finally, for the liberation of the soul from servitude to wealth. Allah has said,

“Take from their wealth a portion in charity to cleanse them and to purify them thereby.” (9:103)

Zakat is an act of worship and a financial charge levied on certain kinds of wealth when two conditions are met:

- 1) The accumulated wealth liable to *zakat* reaches the minimum legal level.
- 2) The total of this accumulated wealth has been in one's possession for a complete (lunar) year, not having dropped below the minimum legal liability in the course of this period. By paying *zakat* the soul is purified from the blight of miserliness and avarice and by it the plight of the poor and needy may also be relieved. Allah has said,

“And give them from the wealth of Allah that He has given you.” (24:33)

The Fast of Ramadan

Hunger leads people to be corruptive. They may cheat, steal, fornicate, take usury, or even kill, in order to search for food by any means, whether to be legal or illegal. They may know the truth, but they have to over look the truth when it causes them to lose some worldly things.

Islam disciplines the person to resist evil and to be patient for maintaining the truth even if it leads him to be hungry or to lose some worldly benefits.

Satan overpowers man through his desire and his soul. The more you satisfy your soul, the more he will overpower you, but when your soul is hungry, Devil's whisperings become weak.

However, we should not forget that Devils in this month of *Ramadan* are chained.

Now, when your soul is weak and hungry from time to another, and Devil is detained in this month, it will become more difficult for Satan to use your soul against you, which is the link between you and him.

At this very moment, you can restrain your soul, and improve your worship and get nearer to Your Lord for the whole year until another *Ramadan* comes. This happens when both soul and Devil are weak then you can be in a better situation to discipline yourself and train to become stronger against all worldly temptations.

Fasting is obligatory on both rich and poor. The rich are not able to buy their way out of this obligation, either with money or with property. All people are equal in terms of this obligation.

Fasting gives the wealthy an opportunity to experience the hunger that his needy brothers are accustomed to feel. Let the rich practice hunger, let him taste it, so that he becomes more merciful to the poor.

When he feels the pangs of hunger he will remember Allah and the blessings and bounty Allah has shown him. His experience of the hunger from which his poor brothers often suffer will move him to give generously in charity.

Whoever observes the fast must abstain from food and drink and sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk. One should also abstain from gossip and backbiting and from all kinds of idle talk. Allah said,

“O believers, decreed upon is fasting, as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous [Godfearing]. [Fasting] for days numbered... So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him then fast it” (2:183-5)

The Prophet ﷺ also said, “Whoever does not abstain from idle talk and action, Allah is in no need of his abstinence from food and drink.”⁽⁸⁸⁾

During this month, Muslims lighten their burden of work and devote more of their time to worship. By day they fast and by night they gather together to perform the *tarawih* prayers and then the *qiyam* prayers in the small hours of the night, and to recite the Book of their Lord. It is a month of spiritual training and of drawing nearer to Allah. A month of repentance to Him for what has come before and of renewed resolve to reform oneself and to keep closely to the straight path, and to re-control his impatient soul.

The month of *Ramadan* has also been justly called the “month of charity” because the Muslims give charity more in this month than they give in any other month. The *shariah* (Allah’s Law) encourages us to give our brothers whatever we can, even a few dates or a little water, for the daily breaking of the fast.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Muslim

Finally, we bid farewell to the month of fasting by giving a special kind of *zakat* (charity) called *zakat al-fitr* (charity when breaking the fast) which must be given to the needy just prior to the *Eid* (feast) prayer to mark the end of fasting before *Eid* with additional sympathy for the poor people, and to let them feel the joy of the feast and to spare them from asking on this day.

It is tragic that many people think they are free while they are detained by their own desire, they are worshiping their desire even though they claim that they believe that Allah is one!

The real free one is he who is not enslaved by his desire, one who is slave to his desire is indeed lead by it. It will finally lead him to destruction and to Hell.

It is important therefore to know the wisdom behind fasting.

The Pilgrimage

It is the obligation of every Muslim to perform the Pilgrimage at least once in his lifetime, if he has the means to do so. The Pilgrimage, or *Hajj*, consists of a particular set of rites that must be performed in a particular place, and at a particular time. It is an act of worship, which entails a certain expense of money and in some cases the slaughter of an animal. It is a physical act, as the rites of *Hajj* include walking around the Ka'ba seven times and walking between the hills of Safa and Marwa, also seven times, as well as remaining at Arafat on the day of the Pilgrimage, and all the hardship of travel from one's home, often in distant parts of the world.

The Pilgrimage also gives us an opportunity to meet Muslims from many lands, all of whom will congregate in Makkah, the place they all stand and face in prayers. At Makkah in the Pilgrimage season, we have the opportunity to meet one another as brothers and sisters, with no regard to race or origin, to color or wealth, since we are all destitute before Allah, coming to ask for His bounty, His forgiveness, and His pleasure.

The rich will walk around the Ka'ba and run between Safa and Marwa just as the poor do, and suffer from the same pain and fatigue as the poor do. Everyone will be dressed the same, in two white wrapping cloths similar to the shroud of the dead. They will

sleep together on the ground in a single tent. And in this as well,
the wealthy will savor the crudeness of life and know that the
blessings of this world are fleeting.
He has neither luxurious dress nor car to distinct his class from
others, as it used to be in his place, but one style of dress, that is
the shroud in which he will be dressed in his grave.

The rich man will know that in the Pilgrimage his wealth will
not spare him much of his hardship. It will not help him escape
from performing the rites of *Hajj* in the white light of the sun, nor
bring him much comfort as he recovers in his tent, just as his
money will not relieve his fatigue and weariness. By the same
token, his wealth will not benefit him on the Day of Resurrection,
unless he fears Allah with the money he has, and spends it in the
right way.

The Pilgrim's garb will remind him that he will be taking
nothing with him except his shroud that he will wear to his grave.

Allah wants him not to be haughty before his brothers because
of his wealth or his richness, which is nothing but a passing
enjoyment that he will not take with him to his grave. Rather, the
value of a person before his Lord is in the purity of his heart and
the soundness of his faith, not in the weight of his purse. It is his
acts which count, and not his money. Thus Allah has said,

***“The day when neither wealth nor sons will
benefit [anyone] except for him who comes to
Allah with a pure heart.”*** (26:88-89)

And He said:

***“Surely the noblest among you in the sight of
Allah is the most Godfearing one among you.”***
(49:13)

A testimony on *Hajj*

We conclude with what Dr. Philip Hitti (Christian) mentioned
in his book “History of the *Arabs*” about Hajj: “Down through the
ages, *Hajj* has continued to serve as the major unifying influence
in Islam and the most effective common bond among the diverse
believers. It rendered almost every capable Muslim perform a

traveler for once in his lifetime. The socializing influence of such a gathering of the brotherhood of believers from the four quarters of the earth is hard to over-estimate. It afforded opportunity for Negroes, Berbers, Chinese, Persians, Turks, Arabs - rich and poor, high and low - to fraternize and meet together on the common ground of faith.

Of all world religions Islam's seems to have attained the largest measure of success in demolishing the barriers of race, color and nationality - at least within the confines of its own community. The line is drawn only between believers and the rest of mankind. These *hajj* gatherings have undoubtedly contributed their share towards the achievement of that result.”

The Pillars of Faith

Faith (IMAN)

The Arabic word “*Iman*” means linguistically: the approval or agreement of what someone says to you. But with respect to the Law of Allah it means to believe in three connected conditions:

- Belief by the heart, in the sense of being convinced in one’s heart.
- Belief by utterance, that is, to pronounce the declaration of faith, that there is no god but Allah and Mohammad is His Messenger.
- Belief by the deed, that your actions are consistent with your heart and with your word.

It is not possible to believe in the declaration of faith without acting upon it, and it is not possible to act upon it or to pronounce it without first believing it in one’s heart. Whoever is aware of the meaning of the Qur’an will certainly have noticed that the Qur’an always draws a comparison between faith and works. A faith without action is dead. Thus we find always this term in the Qur’an:

“Those who believe and do good works.”

This is an indication to us that deeds form a part of faith, and that it is an empty and hollow faith that rings in the heart and on the tongue yet remains without deeds. This is a futile and useless thing. Allah Almighty has said,

“Oh You who believed, why do you say what you do not do?”

It is most hateful to Allah that you say what you do not do.” (61:2)

Lie can be found not only in speech but also in acts

When the Prophet ﷺ was asked about the most noble of deeds he said, “To believe in Allah and His Prophet.”⁽⁸⁹⁾ So the Prophet ﷺ considered faith to be the noblest of good deeds and the criterion

⁽⁸⁹⁾ al-Bukhari 26; Muslim 83.

between the true believer and the hypocrite who feigns belief.

Allah Almighty has said,

“Do people think that they are left to say, ‘We believed,’ and they will not be tested?” (29:2). For how often we find actions are more expressive than tongues.

Faith in word and works, it increases and decreases

The reason these things are linked together is that faith is a word and a deed, which increases and decreases. It increases by more obedience to Allah and it decreases with disobedience to Allah. Thus Allah has said,

“And those who are guided, He increased their guidance and gave them their righteousness [they became Godfearing].” (47:17)

The Prophet ﷺ also said, “There are seventy-seven branches of faith, the highest of which is to say ‘There is no god but Allah,’ and the least of which is to remove an obstacle from the road, and modesty is a branch of faith.”⁽⁹⁰⁾

This doctrine encourages the believers to increase their good works so that their faith will also increase, and will help them to avoid the things that could weaken their faith.

As for those who assert that faith neither increases nor decreases in accordance with works, they are contradicting religion, logic, and reality. This is a very dangerous assertion which will lead to frustration and then the abandonment of good doing.

Why then should we try to outperform one another in doing good works if faith remains as it is without any increase?

Or why should we free ourselves from disobedience to Allah if our disobedience can have no effect upon our faith in any way? Finally, the faith of the prophets was always greater than that of ordinary people.

Thus we see that the faith of some is greater than that of others. No one would say that his faith is stronger than the faith of Abu Bakr or Gabriel.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Muslim 35

The Light of Faith and the Darkness of Disbelief

Faith is a precious grace, the value of which can not be estimated. No one tastes its sweetness and delight but the believers. Thus the believers would accept nothing in exchange for faith and they would not wish to face life without it. Faith is the secret of their happiness in the world.

Faith is not something that can be bought with money, rather it is a blessing which Allah bestows upon whomever He wishes. This is Allah's gift to those who believe in Him and in what He has revealed to His prophets and in what is contained in His Books, for He is most aware of those who deserves this gift.

Allah gives money to those whom He loves and to those whom He does not love, but He gives faith only to those whom He loves.

You may find a rich and powerful disbeliever who is overwhelmed with sorrow until he commits suicide, while a poor believer is overwhelmed with happiness, knowing that the real reward is Allah's pleasure and the real life is the next one not this world.

Belief—although it is an exalted and glorious state—is not a difficult aim to achieve for those who truly seek happiness, but the mad race for the richness of this world occupies many at the expense of their happiness in the next. The love of the world makes the majority blind, panting before the fleeting joys of life, while those of the next slip from their grasp.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever is pleased with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion and with Mohammad as his Prophet, has already known the taste of Faith.”⁽⁹¹⁾

Allah has praised those who believe in the unseen saying:

⁽⁹¹⁾ Muslim 34

“Those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spent out of what We have provided them. And those who believe in what has been revealed to you [Mohammad] and what was revealed before you, and are certain of the Hereafter. Those are following guidance from their Lord, and those are the successful.” (2:3-5)

“The (true) believers are indeed those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fell fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and on their Lord they rely. Those who establish prayer and spend from what We have provided them, Those are indeed the believers. For them are degrees [of high position] with their Lord, and forgiveness and a noble provision. ” (8:2-4)

Belief in Angels

Angels are glorious and noble creatures of Allah. Fashioned from pure and pristine light, they were created for a great purpose and have been charged with specific tasks:

Some of them are constantly engaged in reciting the praises of Allah.

Others are in constant prostration before Allah.

Others convey the revelations of Allah and His words to His messengers.

Others receive the spirit of the dead ones.

Others breathe the spirit into Allah's creatures before they are born.

Others are waiting to blow the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah says,

“Praise is to Allah, Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, Maker of the angels messengers with two, three and four wings. He increases in creation what He wills, for Allah is powerful to do everything.” (35:1)

The angels are miraculous signs of Allah's infinite power, which is demonstrated in their wondrous speed and in their ability to take on many different forms.

Their Characteristics

Some of their characteristics have been described in the Qur'an, such as:

“O You who believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are set [appointed] angels harsh, and severe. They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, but do what they are commanded.” (66:6)

“And they said, ‘(Allah) the Merciful has taken a son.’ Exalted is He! Rather, they are honored servants. They do not precede Him in word, and they act by His command. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for

whomever He accepts, and they – from fear of Him – are apprehensive.

And whoever of them should say, ‘I am a god besides Him,’ that one We would recompense him with Hell.

Thus We do recompense the wrongdoers.” (21:26)

And also in the hadith, “The angels are were created from light and the Jinn were created from smokeless fire, and Adam was created from what has been described to you.”⁽⁹²⁾

Their Number

Many hadiths mention that “The heavens are heavy and it is their right to be so. There is not a hand span in them other than an angel is prostrating there or standing.”⁽⁹³⁾ Another hadith concerns the *Bait al-Ma‘mour* which is a place in the Seventh Heaven directly over the Ka‘aba, which, if it fell, would fall directly on the Ka‘aba. It is a sanctified place as is the earthly *Haram*. Every day seventy thousand angels join those already there and never leave it.⁽⁹⁴⁾

Their mission

They accompany us throughout our lives encouraging us and prompting us to do good. The Prophet ﷺ said, “There is no one among you but has been given his companion from the Jinn and his companion from the angels.”⁽⁹⁵⁾ These help us in our struggle against disbelief, indeed they participate in this, as they did in the Battle of Badr. They praise us so long as we are standing in prayer.

They are with us when we sit remembering Allah and as we pray, and they say *amin* as we supplicate our Lord. And if our saying *amin* coincides with their saying *amin*, then we are assured of forgiveness.⁹⁶

They are constantly seeking Allah’s forgiveness for us and if we supplicate Allah for another believer who is not with us, the angel says “*Amin* and may you have as you have asked for him.”

They protect us from the dangers of Satan, reassure us at the moment of death and give us good news of the mercy of Allah,

⁽⁹²⁾ Muslim 2996

⁽⁹³⁾ al-Tirmidhi 2313

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Muslim and Bukhari.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Muslim 2814

⁹⁶ (Bukhari 780 & Muslim 410)

and they are waiting with us as we wait for Paradise. They gently receive the departed soul. They lower their wings around those who seek knowledge, helping them and their families.

The Purpose of Their Creation

Almighty Allah has created Angels for a purpose and a mission and certain of them are appointed to certain tasks, for example:

- ***Israfil*** is the name of the angel who will blow the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection, when all the dead will rise. Allah said,

“And the Horn will be blown, then whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will faint [swoon] except whom Allah wills. Then it will be blown again, and at once they will be standing looking on!” (39:68)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “How could I rest when the Trumpet-blower has raised his trumpet and awaits his signal.”⁽⁹⁷⁾

- ***Mika'il*** is the name of the angel of rain which brings life to green things and revives the earth.
- ***Gabriel*** is the angel of another rain that the hearts of people need. This rain is not water, but it's revelation and guidance from Allah to His messengers. Gabriel is in charge of conveying Allah's words to the prophets.
- ***The Angel of Death*** is commanded to receive the souls of creation. Almighty Allah has said, ***“Say, the angel of Death will take you [away to death] who is entrusted concerning you, then unto your Lord you will be returned.”*** (32:11)
- ***Munkar and Nakir*** are the two angels who come to interrogate the dead in their graves asking, “Who is your Lord? Who is your Prophet? What is your Book?” Whoever answers correctly will be given glad tidings of Paradise, and whoever cannot answer will be severely punished.
- ***The Bearers of Allah's Throne***. They ask Him forgiveness for the believers. Allah has said,

(⁹⁷) Tirmidhi 2433

“Those [angels] who carry the Throne and those around it, they praise their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who have believed, [saying]. Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way, and protect them from the punishment of the Hell fire. Our Lord, and admit them to the Gardens of Eden which You promised them and whoever became righteous among their fathers, their wives and their offspring, for You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise. And protect them from the [consequences of] evil deeds, for he whom You protect from evil deeds that day, You have given him mercy, and that is the great success.”
(40:7-9)

And He said,

“And there will bear the Throne of your Lord that day eight [angels].” (69:17)

There are some that are protectors of the believers. Allah has said,

“For each [among mankind] angels ranged successively before and behind him, who guard him by Allah's command.” (13:11)

These angels are sent by Allah to protect the believers from the evil of Satan and from whatever harm he may do, according to the will of Allah. Ka'ab said, “If Allah had not sent angels to protect you when you were eating and when you were drinking and when you were undressed, then the jinn would have carried you away.”

These are the same angels that Allah sends down to the believers to assist them in battles against disbelievers. Allah has said,

“When (at the battle of Badr) your Lord inspired to the angels, ‘I am with you. So strengthen those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieved, so strike [them] upon the necks, and strike of them every fingertip.’ ” (8:12)

There are also angels who are sent to record the deeds of each of us, both good and bad. Allah said,

“There are [indeed appointed angels] over you, are keepers who are noble, recorders [for your deeds], they know what you do”. (82:10-12) And

“He does not utter a word but that there is an observer ready [to record].” (50:18)

There are angels who go to wherever Allah is being remembered and praised. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “There is no gathering of people in any of Allah’s mosques, assembled to recite His book or to study it together, other than assurance will descend upon them, and mercy will cloak them, and angels press around them, and Allah will mention them to whomsoever is near to Him.”⁽⁹⁸⁾ And the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah has angels that ply the roads used by those who remember Allah. When they find someone who is remembering Allah, they call out to the others saying ‘Come quickly to your task’ and they all press around filling the sky with their wings.”⁽⁹⁹⁾ There is also an angel who comes to write the destiny of each of us even as we are being formed in our mothers’ wombs.

The Prophet, ﷺ said, “Each of you is fashioned in your mother’s womb, for you pass forty days as an unformed thing and then you are as a thing that clings for a like period, then you are as a piece of chewed up flesh for a like period, then Allah sends the angel who breaths into this its spirit and who is ordered to record four things for it: its provision, its time on earth, its occupation, and its disposition, either joyful or melancholy.”⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Muslim 2701; Tirmidhi 3376; Nisa’i 8:249.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Bukhari 6408; Muslim 2689.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

The value of the believer before the angels

One of the honors Allah has accorded the believers is that He has caused the angels to remember the believer in the assembly of Allah and to pray for him to Allah. Even those angels who bear the Throne ask for them to be forgiven. Allah has said,

“Those [angels] who carry the Throne and those around it, they praise their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who have believed, [saying], ‘Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way, and protect them from the punishment of the Hell fire. ‘Our Lord, and admit them to the Gardens of Eden which You promised them and whoever became righteous among their fathers, their wives and their offspring, for You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise. And protect them from the [consequences of] evil deeds, for those whom You protect them from evil deeds that day, You have given him mercy, and that is the great success.’” (40:7-9)

The Prophet ﷺ also said, “The angels continue to praise you while you stand in prayer, saying ‘Oh Allah, bless him, Oh Allah, forgive him, Oh Allah, protect him’ and they do this for as long as you remain in the mosque unless you lose your ablution.”⁽¹⁰¹⁾

The greatest mission of the angels is to convey revelation to mankind, and they are sent to protect mankind and to help mankind against their enemies and they are constant in seeking Allah’s forgiveness for mankind and asking Allah to take them into Paradise.

The only threat for devils are the angels. Devils do not stay where angels stay, and angels look for places of righteous people. Therefore, the angels are the weapons and security of the believer,

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Abu Daud 488

those who choose the way of devils will be weaponless before them.

Effects on the believers of the belief in Angels

The belief in angels and their protection of mankind from the evil of Satan is a mighty defense against the constant doubts and anxieties, which many people feel.

These doubts and anxieties come directly from Satan, who hopes to persuade them that by acting upon his urging they will be released from their fear. It is the height of ignorance for someone to believe that Allah would let all manner of devils loose against mankind without providing any kind of defense against them.

Others foolishly think that Allah has sent cowardly angels who are afraid of evil jinn and men and who flee before them. Belief in angels is a part of the belief in the unseen, and belief in the unseen is one of the qualities of belief which Allah has

praised in the Qur'an saying:

“Those have indeed on guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.” (2:5)

What is your faith in the Angels?

The believers all know that the angels are real and that they are required to believe in them and they know what they are required to believe about them. The foolish ideas that angels look like fat naked children roaming the earth in flight or the idea that some angels are soldiers to Satan are false beliefs.

Before Islam, the Arabs used to think that the angels were the daughters of Allah.

The Jews hate Gabriel and take him to be their enemy, while Christians make him divine with Allah. They believe that he is not allowed to speak of his own, but what he hears from Allah he says, and he was sent by Allah not by himself (See the Bible, John 16:12 & 14:25 K.J Version).

The Old Testament mentions the Holy Spirit many times but not as god, and none of the prophets or the people of Israel understood that the Holy Spirit is the third part of God! This shows the two contradictory extremes. The first hates the angel Gabriel, while the second loves him until it makes him a part of God.

What disturbs man disturbs angels

One who believes in angels should avoid anything that disturbs them, and surely they are disturbed by whatever disturbs human beings.

The believer knows that there are always angels with him, and so he feels their eyes upon him after those of Allah. He does not disobey Allah while he knows that the angels are with him, and he is careful not to do anything so bad as to cause them to leave him, because once the angels leave, the door is open for Satan, who is always lurking, awaiting his opportunity.

Surely the believer, if he knew how long the angels stand in prayer, how long they prostrate themselves to Allah, how much they praise Allah in the night and in the day, would be amazed and never think of comparing his worship with theirs.

The Spiritual Merits of the Angels and of Human Beings

There are some different opinions about the relative merits of angels and human beings.

Some scholars say that all human beings are spiritually superior to the angels.

Others have limited this by saying that believers are spiritually superior to them because Allah commanded the Angels to prostrate themselves to Adam and did not command anyone to prostrate themselves to the Angels. Still others say that the Angels are the spiritual superiors of human beings since the Angels go up into the highest heavens and descend to earth and they never disobey Allah but do precisely as He commands them to do. They sing His praises night and day and never stop doing this. Some again say that the angels are superior to human beings with the exception of the prophets.

The final word in this discussion is a comment made by *Ibn Taimiya* (scholar) who said, “The believers are the spiritual superiors of the Angels, considering the perfection of their state in the end, in Paradise: the believers in Paradise will be greeted by Allah and given all that their hearts desire and the angels will serve them.”

However, with respect to the perfection of their state at the beginning, the angels are superior to human beings. They are even now in the highest heavens, free from all the afflictions of mankind, totally immersed in the worship of Allah.

There can be no doubt that this state is superior to that of human beings, not to mention the fact that a person may make a mistake and disobey Allah at any time, no matter how much he devotes himself to worship.”

Ibn al-Qayim remarked that this distinction was the secret to understanding the merits of each, validating the evidence for the merits of each and sealing the right of each one upon the other.

Belief in the Revealed Books

We believe in the Books, which the prophets have brought, since Allah revealed all of them to His messengers. Allah said, ***“Whoever disbelieves in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, and the Last Day, has certainly gone far astray.”*** (4:136)

Allah has taught us about His Books in this verse:

“Say, ‘We believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, the Tribes, and what has been revealed to Moses and Jesus received, and what the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are [Muslims] submissive to Him.’” (2:136)

Of these, the following are mentioned by name:

- The Torah which was revealed to Moses,

“And We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light.” (5:44)

- The Gospel which was revealed to Jesus,

“And We have already sent Noah and Abraham and placed in their descendants the Prophethood and the scripture, among them is the guided one, while too many of them are defiantly disobedient.

“Then We sent following their footsteps Our Messengers, and followed them by Jesus, son of Mary, and gave him the Gospel. (57:26-27)

The Psalms were given to David, and the *Suhuf* (scrolls) were revealed to Abraham and Moses.

The Qur'an is the final revelation revealed by Allah to the last of the prophets, a confirmation of all the revelations that preceded it and a correction to the distortions that had crept into them and a re-assertion of what had been suppressed in them. Allah said,

“And We have sent down to you the Book with the truth, confirming that which preceded it of the scriptures, and as a criterion over it.” (5:48)

Thus the Qur’an is an abrogation of all-previous revelation and Allah has undertaken to protect it from the distortions and corruption which the Jews and Christians had visited upon the revelations given to them.

“It is We who sent down the Revelation, and We are the protectors of it.” (15:9)

Indeed, hundreds of years have passed and no one has been able to introduce any distortions or corruption to the text of the Qur’an. It is today as it was revealed, and so it shall remain until the end of time.

The Qur’an’s abrogation of the Torah and the Gospel

The Qur’an abrogates, or supersedes, what is contained in the Torah and the Gospel. There can be no doubt that the Torah we have today has been distorted and tampered with. This can be seen by a very simple examination of the text. Not only does it contain insults against Allah, and insults against His messengers, but it urges disdain and arrogance toward many nations and advocates their subjugation to the will of Allah’s “Chosen People.” Finally, it contains lewd and sexually explicit material that most people would be ashamed to read.

The current state of the previous revelations

In Genesis 1:2 Allah is described as being tired, in Genesis 5:35 He is said to be afraid, and in Genesis 6:6 and Numbers 3:45 He is said to be distressed. In the book of Genesis (22:33) Jacob is said to have wrestled with Allah and thrown Him to the ground, and the charge is made repeatedly in Exodus that Allah provoked the Israelites to theft and illegal occupation (3:21, 11:1, 12:35). In the book of Ezekeil Allah is said to have ordered the Prophet Ezekeil to eat human waste mixed with pastry and then offer it to others (4:9). How could this come from Allah and at the same time be full of lies and accusations against Him? Could the Revelation of Allah really contain insults against Allah such as this verse: “Why

do You stand a far off, O Lord? Why do You hide Yourself in times of troubles?"(Psalms 89:10)?

The prophets of Allah are naturally given much the same treatment. Thus Genesis reports that the Prophet Lot had incestuous relations with his two daughters, who both bore him children (19:30), that the Prophet Haroun, the brother of Moses, made a golden calf for the Israelites to worship beside Allah (Exodus 30:32), although he was prophet (see Exodus 7: 1). The Prophet David raped his neighbor's wife (1 Samuel 11:1), and also used to dance for the people (2 Samuel 6:20), and the Prophet Solomon, according to 1 Kings 11:1, was so overcome by his fondness for women that he denied Allah and returned to the worship of idols. The Prophet Judah (Genesis 38:15) had sex with his son's wife and Job renounced Allah and cursed Him and accused Him of injustice because of his affliction (Job 16:9 and 24:12). According to Genesis again, Noah got drunk and exposed himself and remained naked (9:20).

As for the lewd tales, one has only to read Psalms 1:13, Song of Solomon 4:1, Proverbs 6:16, Psalms 8:8 and Hoseah 1:2, and then decide for himself.

The Israelites are placed above all creation in several passages from the Book of Isaiah. Thus in 43:4 Allah is made to tell the Jews how dear they are to Him, and how He respects them and loves them. In 49:22 they are told how all creation has been made subordinate to them and how all people will be made to lick the dust of their feet, and in 61:5 they are told that they will eat up the wealth of all nations and be masters of the earth.

The (holy) book calls people to wreak havoc on their enemies, to kill women and children and the old. For an example of this see Ezekiel 9:5 & Numbers 10:1.

Not surprisingly, there is no mention of a final judgment in any of the Jewish books, no reward and no punishment. This news comes only in the New Testament, even though the Christian scriptures do not amount to even a tenth of the Jewish books.

Finally, these books are full of errors and contradictions. For example, the Gospel of Matthew (1:18) gives a genealogy of Jesus naming 28 ancestors in the male line between himself and Adam, while in Luke 3:23 the same genealogy contains 42 names almost all of which are different than those in Matthew's account. According to Matthew, Joseph the carpenter, who was the husband of Mary, was a son of Jacob, while Luke says that he was a son of Hali, not Jacob. The Gospel of John quotes Jesus as saying, "If I were to testify for myself then my testimony would be true" (8:14), and again in the same Gospel of John, "If I were to testify for myself then my testimony would be false." (5:31)

While all Christians agree that Allah revealed the book of Deuteronomy to Moses during his own lifetime, we find in it the following account of the death of Moses: "And Moses, the Servant of the Lord, died there in the Land of Moab and His Lord buried him therein. To this day no man knows the place of his tomb. Moses lived to the age of "one hundred and twenty years." (Deuteronomy 34:5)

Acknowledgment of distortion in the Scriptures

There is a passage in the book of Jeremiah which clearly points to the hand of human intervention in the revealed books. It says, “How can you say we are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Behold, the false pen of the scribes had changed it in to a lie.”

(Jeremiah 8:8)

This again draws light to the necessity of a further revelation to safeguard the Torah and the Gospel, to reaffirm the truth that they contain, to make plain the falsehood and distortion that have entered them, and to correct the wrong beliefs that these have given rise to.

The Muslim position on the Scriptures of the Christians and the Jews

Therefore our attitude to the Bible is not contradictory, when we say we believe generally in what was revealed on the Jews through Moses, and Jesus, but the scriptures that Christians and Jews hold today have been substantially altered by human intervention. The Torah that was revealed to Moses, and the Gospel that was revealed to Jesus do not fully represent the true revelation.

The Christians themselves are deeply divided over what is and what is not in the Gospel. The Roman Catholic Church, for example, authorizes a Bible of seventy-three books while the Eastern Orthodox Church authorizes one of eighty-one books.

Most of the English-speaking Protestant denominations use the King James version that contains sixty-six books. They account for the shortfall by accusing the Roman Catholic Church of having included seven spurious books in their version. Each sect, of course, believes that its own version is the most reliable. The claim to reliability is perhaps best illustrated by the history of the enduringly popular King James Version, which itself has been repeatedly revised to correct the numerous mistakes it contains.

Two modern revisions of this translation are the “Revised Standard Version” and the “New International Version”. Under the assertion of revision, there have been numerous omissions, additions and modifications to the text. A case in point is the disappearance of an entire blocks of text: Matthew 17:21; Mark 5:44-46; Luke 17:37 John 5:4, the first letter of John 5:7 and Acts 8:34. The editors explain that these passages had been added some time after the fifth century CE.

Then the Jehovah’s Witnesses come to tell us that there are more than fifty thousand errors in the King James version, and the name of Jehovah was omitted seven thousand times.

Then the Mormons come to tell us that they do not accept the King James Version as definitive, and indeed provide an entirely new account, which they call the Book of Mormon. Whatever the Book of Mormon confirms of the King James Version they accept, while anything in the King James Version which the Book of Mormon calls into question is rejected. Who knows? At any time a new group could arise and claim to correct tomorrow what these groups are correcting today, and so on until the end of time.

In this way the differences between them multiplied, and it is the differences over their book that most strongly attest to the falsehood of their beliefs. It is the Book, the Revelation, which must provide the evidence for any religion and the proof of its claims.

The Book is a sign of truth or of falsehood. If the Book is true and free of distortions, then the religion it teaches is true, and if it is full of falsehood, then the religion it reports cannot be true. After all of these, Christians and Jews still insist that the book they hold is the Book of Allah. Some of them admit the truth, that their book contains some of Allah's revelations and some other texts that were written by men, and that these two have become mixed up.

Still, they insist that we can distinguish between what is good in it and what is not. They say that it is enough for us to take what is true from their Scriptures and leave what is false aside. Statements such as these merely confirm that their Books have been altered, and show us that they are neither serious nor concerned about the search for Truth. How will it be possible for us to determine what is true and what is false in these books?

History is a witness that sectarianism has a major role both in promoting false beliefs and in attempting to suppress them. Changes to the text aside, how are we ever to know that an entire revelation has not been omitted at some point, having disappeared without a trace? How could we be asked to commit ourselves to a revelation which was admittedly composed, at least in part, by the hand of man? This seems quite impossible so long as we have an

alternative in the Qur'an, which does show us where their books have been changed and where they speak the truth. Some of them ask the Muslim, "How can we make sure that no change has occurred in the Qur'an?" Although they do not find any dispute about it as they can easily find about the Bible, they do not address this question to themselves.

If we were to offer them a plate of food in which some parts are poisoned and some parts are free from poison, who would say, "I will try to eat from the parts that are not poisoned?" Rather, we should take care and not eat from it at all. Why should someone not care for the correctness of his beliefs, the correctness of his religion, when his success or failure on the Day of Resurrection depends entirely upon this? These distorted and altered revelations are poison which leave the body to attack the soul.

The point of believing in all of Allah's Books

To believe in Allah, is to believe in everything which He has revealed, and not merely in part of it. To deny something in the Bible that is contradicted by the Qur'an is not to disbelieve in something that was revealed but rather to identify something that has been changed by the hand of man.

In Allah's other revelations we see His divine wisdom in giving each nation what is appropriate to them in terms of knowledge and law. Thus Allah has said in the Qur'an, ***"And for each We have prescribed a law and a Way"*** (5:48).

Nevertheless, the source of their beliefs is the same. They do not differ over this or is there any contradiction in it. Finally, the belief in the unrevealed portions of the Book is part of our belief in the unseen. And Allah has praised those who believe in the unseen and described them as having attained peace and happiness.

Belief in the messengers

We believe in the noble messengers who have been chosen by Allah. Allah sent messengers to every nation to call them to worship Him alone and to give glad tidings of Paradise to those who choose to obey Allah, and to warn those who disobey of the punishment of hellfire, and that every nation was sent a messenger, as Allah said,

“And there was no nation but there had passed a warner among them.” (35:24)

Among the articles of faith with regard to the messengers are:

- That they are absolutely truthful and free from corruption and great sin that plague ordinary human beings;
- That they conveyed all that was revealed to them in the most complete fashion, despite the fact that they did not all enjoy the same success or following among their peoples;
- That some of them will be coming on the Day of Judgment with millions of followers;
- That some of them will be coming with only one or two followers;
- That some will be coming and none had followed them at all;
- That the number of their followers will be of no consequence to them, for what was important to them is to convey the mission that Allah had ordered them to convey regardless of whether this bore the fruit of success or not;
- That some prophets are given favors over others. Allah said,

“Those messengers, We have exceeded some of them over others. Among them are those to whom Allah spoke and raised some in degrees” (2:253).

Allah grants his favor to whomsoever He will. Whoever denies any of the messengers has disbelieved in them all. Anyone who says that he believes in Mohammad and disbelieves in Jesus will not get any benefit from his believing in Mohammad.

According to the Qur'an, a person who believes in some of the messengers and disbelieves in some others of them, is a disbeliever. Allah said,

“Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers, and wish to discriminate between Allah and His messengers and say: we believe in some and disbelieve in others, and wish to adopt a way between: those are the disbelievers truly. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment.” (4:150)

Allah then praised those who believe in all the messengers saying,

“But for those who believe in Allah and His messengers and do not discriminate between any of them – to those He is going to give their rewards. And Allah is ever Forgiving, most Merciful.” (4:152)

The Humanness of the messengers

A second aspect of our belief in the messengers of Allah is that they were human beings and did not have any divine qualities. The Qur'an says,

“Say, ‘I am a only a man like you. It was revealed to me that your God is one God.’” (18:110)

They are subject to the same things that all human beings are, and they become sick and they also die:

“And We never sent before you [Mohammad] messengers except that they used to eat food and walk in the markets.” (25:20)

And He said,

“We have already sent messengers before you, and We assigned to them wives and descendants.” (13:38).

Prophet Abraham declared these soft words of monotheism before his people, saying,

“The One who created me is He who guides me, and it is He who feeds me and gives me drink, and when I am sick, it is He who cures me, and it is He

who causes me death, then gives me life again.”
(26:78-81)

The messengers have no knowledge of the unseen except that which has been revealed to them by Allah. In fact, what was revealed to them can no longer be considered “unseen” since they have knowledge of it, just as we do after they have conveyed it to us.

Indeed, Allah commanded His Prophet to say:

“If I had the knowledge of the unseen I would have sought more good, and misfortune would never touched me.” (7:188)

The prophets have no power to benefit nor to harm themselves, indeed, Allah commanded the Prophet to say, ***“I have no power to harm you or benefit you.”*** (72:21)

The prophets are innocent of any blame for what people said and did after them in disregard to their own teachings. The Christians, for example, exaggerated the honor and station of Jesus to the point of making him a partner with Allah, sharing in His Divinity and finally making him into a “son” of Allah. Allah had already forbidden them from such exaggerations saying, ***“O People of the Book, do not go to extremes in your religion.”*** (4:171)

By the same token, our Prophet ﷺ feared that we might take the same course as they, and so he said, “Do not exaggerate about me as the Christians have exaggerated about Jesus the Son of Mary. I am but a slave, so call me, ‘The slave of Allah and His Messenger’

I do not want you to raise me up above the station which Allah Almighty has accorded me. I am Mohammad, the slave of Allah and His Messenger.”⁽¹⁰²⁾ This was the Prophet’s favorite description of himself, even Allah referred to him in this way saying,

“And if you are in any doubt about what We have revealed to our slave.” (2:23)

(¹⁰²) Bukhari 3445

This is the favored description of the other prophets too, and the most glorious status that anyone could aspire to Allah referred to both David and to Job as His slaves in chapter 38.

The Seal of the prophets

We have a complete and comprehensive belief in the old prophets, and we believe in what was revealed to them. However, little of their original revelations remains once we take account of the way people mixed up their own words with the revelations of Allah, and of how they played about with the revealed Books.

As for our belief in Mohammad, upon whom be peace, this belief must be accompanied with specific action. The *shariah* (Law) that was revealed to him superseded all previous ones, as it sealed and completed the teachings of the previous prophets, those teachings that had become garbled by the meddling hands of men. Allah said in the Qur'an,

“And Mohammad is not the father of any one of you, but the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.” (33: 40)

AL QADAR

Qadar is Allah's divine knowledge of what will be, and Allah's writing of the destiny of all that will be until the end of time. It is Allah's determination of what will become of all creation, even before it was brought into creation.

It is the knowledge that everything will occur in an appointed time and in a particular way because it happens according to what Allah has decided. Belief in *qadar* is a fundamental aspect of faith and one of its pillars. Whoever rejects this belief will find that Allah has rejected his deeds.

The distinction between *Qadar* and *Qada'*

A distinction is made between *qadar* and *qada'*, the former being considered Allah's divine knowledge of what will become of creation in the future, and the latter being Allah's direction of events according to His knowledge and His will.

In fact, to believe in *qadar* means that you accept that nothing in the world lives or dies, is sick or well, is rich or poor, other than by Allah's direction and His pleasure.

Al-Tahawi said, "All events flow according to His determination and His pleasure. What He wants is done. Whatever a person desires will only happen if Allah so wills it: what Allah wants to happen to them will happen, and what He does not want to happen will not be. No one may sit in approval of His decision, and no one may pass judgment on His wisdom."⁽¹⁰³⁾

The correct understanding of qadar

Belief in *qadar* is one of the pillars of faith; works have no value if one denies it.

Therefore, we must ensure that our belief in *qadar* is free of the misunderstandings which many people have and which threaten to

⁽¹⁰³⁾al-Albani *Sharh al-Tahawiyah*, p. 153.

undermine all of our good works. Yahya ibn Ma'mar said, "We came across Abdullah ibn Omar ibn al-Khattab one day and we mentioned to him that we had met some people who recited the Qur'an and occupied themselves in the pursuit of knowledge. These people asserted that there was no such thing as *qadar* and that all things were determined as they came to pass, without Allah knowing about them until they occurred.

Abdullah said, 'When you see them again tell them that I am nothing to them and they are nothing to me, and tell them that the one who swears by this is Abdullah ibn Omar. If they have a mountain of gold the likes of Uhud and spend it in the way of Allah, Allah would not accept it of them until they believe in *qadar*.'⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Ibn Abbas said that *qadar* is the system of *tawhid*. Whoever says that Allah is One but denies *qadar*, then his denial contradicts his belief in the oneness of Allah.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

Source of the belief in *Qadar*

The principle of the belief in *qadar* rests upon two important sources:

The first principle: is to believe that Allah has prior knowledge of the deeds of His creatures, of their provision in the world and of the duration of their lives from a time prior to their creation. All which Allah has commanded for each member of creation has been written on the Preserved Tablet.

Allah orders the Angel to breathe life into each of us as we are still in our mother's womb and to write four things: our provision, the length of our life, its occupation in the world, and our disposition either happy or miserable.

Whoever considers carefully the nature of divine knowledge will be prevented from misguidance in his understanding of *qadar*.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾Muslim 8.
⁽¹⁰⁵⁾al-Lalka'i 1224, and *al-Ajri fil-Sharia* 215.

Surely, Allah knows all that has been and all that will be, and He knows what things that did not happen would have been like if they have happened.

Allah knows that if the disbelievers were returned to the world a second time they would return to their disbelief.

“And they are crying in it for help, [saying] ‘Our Lord, let us out. We will be doing good deeds other than what we were doing.’ (35:37).

They also say:

“If you could but see when they are made to stand before Fire they say, If only we were returned [to life] then we will not deny the verses of our Lord and would be of the believers!”

But it had appeared to them what they used to hide before. And even if they were returned, they would return to that which they were forbidden, and They are certainly liars!” (6:27-28).

And also:

“Had Allah known any good in them, He would have made them hear, but even if He had made them hear, they would [still] have turned away, rejecting [as before].” (8:23)

Allah’s prior knowledge of their disbelief does not mean that He had dealt unjustly with them.

Allah has in another place confirmed human will saying,
“And say, this is the truth from Your Lord, so whoever wills, let him believe, and who ever wills, let him disbelieve.” (18:29)

And again in the verse:

“For whoever wills among you to become straight.” (81:28)

Allah also confirmed their freedom of action saying,

***“You are only being recompensed [for] what you
used to do.” (52:16)***

However, Allah’s will is supreme; thus He says,
***“But you do not will except that Allah wills it,
(Allah) The Lord of worlds.” (81:29)***

Whoever sins to Allah, is not sinning despite the will of Allah;
For Allah does whatever He wills. And He willed to give humans
the will to choose between good and evil, and this is a choice that
was not given to the Angels.

THE ERRORS OF BELIEF IN PREDESTINATION

If we say that human beings are predestined to sin, and that they are unable to avoid sin in any way, then this statement must lead us to a number of false conclusions, among them:

1. That Allah will not take us to account for our sin, nor reward the obedient for their obedience, for how could it be that Allah compels us to sin and then He punishes the sinner and reward to the good doer?
2. Then neither the Jews nor the Christians should be punished because they did not disobey Him willingly but He forced them to do so.
3. This belief exonerates the wrongdoer and attributes his wrongdoing to Allah. The blame for his actions would be directed rather against Allah. Yet Allah is far above any possibility of blame.

Belief in *qadar* then involves four aspects:

- 1) A belief in Allah's primordial knowledge of the destiny of all His creatures, their time on earth and their future actions,
- 2) That these things were written on the Preserved Tablet,
- 3) That the will of Allah must come to pass and that He comprehends all things, and
- 4) That Allah is the Creator of everything, and that everything is itself created.

The second principle: is the belief that what Allah wills it, and what He does not will, is not. Nothing moves or stops except by His command and His permission. There is nothing but Allah is its Creator, for there is no other Creator than He. Nevertheless, Allah has commanded His servants to obey Him and to obey His messengers, and He has forbidden them from disobedience to Him and to His messengers.

Allah never does wrong to anyone, but people do wrong to themselves. Allah does not like wrongdoing nor does He like corruption nor does He enjoin lewdness, nor is He pleased with ungratefulness or disbelief.

He does not like corruption and he does not command people to commit sin, and He does not like His servants to be disbelievers. He does not oblige people to do what they truly do not want to do. Rather He said,

“And say, this is the truth from Your Lord, so whoever wills [to believe] let him believe, and whoever wills [to disbelieve], let him disbelieve.” (18:29)

A refutation of the false claims about *qadar*

Those who have misunderstood the matter of *qadar* differ among themselves:

- **The first group** believed in *qadar* but then used it as an excuse for the sins and disbelief. They said, “It is Allah who predestined our sins.” They declared mankind innocent of the wrongdoing they had committed, and laid responsibility for this upon Allah. These people say that whatever they do, they are predestined to do so. They call this *qadar* and they say that some people are destined to be disbelievers and some are destined to be corrupt and some are destined to be hypocrites and none of them have in fact the choice or the will to avoid their fate.

These people should look at the Law of Allah, His commandments and His prohibitions, rather than His Divine Will.

For Allah revealed books and sent messengers in order that His servants could act according to His Law, not in order to give them excuses for their disobedience. For this reason, these resemble the previous disbelievers who used to say:

“The partner worshippers will say, ‘If Allah had willed, we wouldn’t have associated partners (with Him) nor would have our fathers, nor would we have forbidden anything.’ So did those who were before them deny until they tasted Our punishment”.

Allah replied to them saying:
“Say, “do you have any knowledge that you can produce for us? You follow nothing but an assumption, and you are not but falsifying. Say, with Allah is the final-reaching [conclusive] argument. If He had willed, He would have guided you all.” (6:148-149)

That is to say, had Allah willed, he would have forced them to obey and made them like the Angels who ***“do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, but do what they are commanded.”*** (66:6)

In another verse we find the same disbelievers saying,

“And whenever they commit a [great] sin, they say, ‘We found our fathers doing it, and Allah has ordered us to do it’. Say, Allah does not order immorality. Do you say about Allah what you do not know?” (7:28)

They do not apply these same arguments with respect to their wealth or their occupations. We do not find them sitting idly in their houses and saying, “If Allah wishes, He will provide for us with sustenance,” and then waiting to see if Allah will allow them to die of hunger. None of them would reply to someone who had hit them, “If Allah had wished, you would not have hit me.”

Once a man was brought to Omar ibn al-Khattab and accused of theft. Omar asked him, “Why did you steal? He said, “Allah preordained that I would do it.” Omar had his right hand cut off and then had him flogged eighty lashes for lying. The amputation was for theft and the flogging was for fabricating a lie against his Lord.

Therefore, who disobeys Allah and then claims that it was Allah Who made him do it is guilty of two sins, the one being greater than the other.

- The first sin is the disobedience to Allah.
- The second is to wrongly attribute one’s disobedience to Allah, and this is a greater sin than the first. He then must excuse the Jews and the Christians for their disbelief, since they must also believe that it is Allah who forced them to disbelieve.

This is the height of falsehood with respect to the belief in *qadar*.

The second group accepted *qadar* but believed that disbelief and disobedience to Allah are not included in it, and claimed that Allah did not create disbelief and disobedience. These are the *Qadariyah*, whom the Prophet said would be the “Magians of this nation.”⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Some of these people also denied that Allah has prior knowledge of the deeds of men. A scholar called Al-Shafii said. “If you argue with one of the Qadariyah group, ask him about the knowledge of Allah (of the future). If he acknowledges it, then you finish him, but if he denies it, then charge him with blasphemy.

It does not contradict our belief in *qadar* if we say that we must take all means and strive and work, while believing that our striving is also predestined by Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Everyone of you has a place reserved for him in Hell and a place in Paradise.” The people asked him, “Should we not depend on what has been written for us?” The Prophet said, “Act, and the actions of each will take him to that for which he has been created. Whoever is of the people of rejoicing, he will act as the people of rejoicing do, and whoever is of the people of despair, he will act as the people of despair do.” Then the Prophet ﷺ recited the verse,¹⁰⁷

“As for he who gives and fears [Allah] and believes in the best reward, We will ease him toward ease.” (92:5-7)

A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and left his camel outside unattended. He asked the Prophet, “Shall I tie her up or shall I depend (on Allah)?” He said, “Tie her up and depend on Allah.”⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾*Mishkat al-Misabih*, (ed. al-Albani) 107.

¹⁰⁷ (Bukhari 6605 & Muslim 2647).

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾Tirmidhi.

The Effect of the Belief in *Qadar* among the pious predecessors

The belief of *qadar* which the companions learned about from the Prophet had the most profound effect upon them. Quoting two well-known *hadith* can show the best meaning of the concept of *qadar*.

The first of these is what the Prophet ﷺ said to Ibn Abbas, “Young man, I shall teach you some words. Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask Allah, and if you seek help, seek help from Allah. And be aware that if the entire Nation were to gather together to benefit you anything, they would benefit you nothing except by what Allah had prescribed for you. And if the entire Nation gathered together to do you harm, they would not harm you except by what Allah had prescribed for you. The pens have already been lifted, and the pages have dried.”¹⁰⁹

- **The second** is what he also said: “The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, although there is good in both. Take care over what is of benefit to you, and seek help from Allah, and do not falter. And if anything befalls you, do not say ‘If only I had done such and such, then such and such would have happened,’ but rather say ‘Allah has already willed it, and what He wills is what must happen. For surely the word ‘if’ opens the door for Satan’s work’.”⁽¹¹⁰⁾

This belief engendered in the hearts of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ calm, reassurance and nobility. It steadied their spirits as they set out to convey this religion to all humanity, and the forces of all the earth were made small before their faith and belief in the power of Allah and His destiny. The other factor is that they were working for Allah, and if they died, they died for Him, and that death is already predestined so it would not come before or after its appointed term.

¹⁰⁹ (Tirmithi 2518)

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Muslim 2664.

No happiness can ever be greater than this nor can bravery be greater than that of these faithful hearts which believed that the whole matter is in the hand of Allah, and that people will never overcome the power of Allah.

All forces of the earth would be unable to move a person who held knowledge of this in his heart.⁽¹¹¹⁾

One who has the pure knowledge of *qadar* realizes that the misfortunes that befall him should not miss him, and that if the whole Nation gathered against him, they could do him no harm except by what Allah has written for him. Such a person knows that no soul ever dies before it has received the provision and the time that Allah has ordained for it, as Allah has said,

“But never will Allah delay a soul when its time has come. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do.” (63:11)

And as He said,
“When their time has come, they will not remain an hour, nor will they precede [it].” (7:34)

Such a person who holds this knowledge in his soul is the only one who frees himself from being slave to slaves, and becomes a slave to the Creator of slaves.

How could such person submit himself to any power on earth while he knows that all which concerns him is entirely in the hands of the Creator of the heavens and the earth? How could he ever submit himself to any master who has risen from the dust? This doctrine and belief in *qadar* is sufficient to remove all traces of faint-heartedness and cowardice from the heart.

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Muhammad Nu'im Yasin, *al-Iman* p. 119.

Being satisfied with Allah's will

The Muslim rejoices in another valuable grace, that is to be content with what Allah has decreed for him, whatever that may be. When the knowledge of *qadar* rests in the soul of a person, it makes him confident that whatever happens, happens by the command of Allah and in accordance to His will. All events unfold according to the Divine Will of Allah and according to His wisdom and His plan. Thus Allah reassures us saying, **“But perhaps you hate a thing while it may be good for you, and you may love a thing that is bad for you. And Allah knows while you do not”**. (2:216)

Especially when he remembers his sins at the moment when he was stricken with affliction, he wishes that this affliction will cause forgiveness for his sins and bring with it expiation.

Allah says:

“Whatever disaster strikes you is because of what your hands have earned.” (42:30)

The believer knows that, it has been decreed by Allah, so he remains content and complies, without objection, hoping to be rewarded and forgiven. “No fatigue, no sorrow, no disease, no sadness, no hurting, no distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that.”¹¹²

When he remembers that prophets were prone to tests and trials more than all mankind he will be more patient. The Prophet Muhammad said, “The most tested people are the prophets and then those closer to their way. Every one is tested as the faith he has; if his faith is strong, his test will be heavier, and if his faith is light, then his test will be lightened. The test remains with him until he walks on earth and there is no more sin on him”¹¹³

¹¹² (Bukhari 5641)

¹¹³ (Tirmithi 2400).

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Wondrous is the matter of the believer. Every matter ends with good for him, and this is for no one but for the believer. If good fortune touches him, he thanks Allah for it. This is good for him, and if any misfortune touches him, he stands patient, knowing that this is good for him.”¹¹⁴

Allah tests the extent of His servant’s patience, for patience is faith in itself, and Allah promised the patient the greatest reward, as He says:

“The patient will surely be repaid their reward without account.” (39:10)

And He says:

“O believers, seek help through patience and prayer; Allah is with those patient ones.

And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah ‘They are dead’ Rather, they are alive, but you do not sense it.

And We will surely test you by some kinds of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth, lives and fruits. But give good tidings to the patient.

Those who say, when a disaster strikes them, ‘Indeed we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return.’

Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided.” (2:153-157)

Hence, we should know that the bad is not really bad from all angles, for instance, illness is bad, but it is good from another angle, for the forgiveness it causes to the believer from his sins.

As for the disbeliever he should hope for no expiation, forgiveness or reward for the difficulty he faces. On the contrary, the trouble remains with him until it makes him upset, sad, then became crazy, until he reaches to the extent of committing suicide, then, his punishment at the Hereafter will by the same tool he that used for suicide.

¹¹⁴ (Muslim299)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “He who killed himself with a thing, will be tormented with it at the Day of Resurrection” And “He who killed himself with a steel (weapon) then, his steel will be in his hand, thrusting it in his stomach forever, and he who drank a poison and killed himself, then he will be sipping that poison in the Fire of Hell where he is doomed for ever and ever; and he who killed himself by falling from a mountain will be constantly falling therefrom in the Fire of Hell.”¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ (Muslim109-110)

BELIEF IN THE LAST DAY

Believing in the “Last Day” means, believing in the Day of Resurrection, when Allah will raise all His creations up alive out of their graves, and the fate of each of them will be decided and the result of this long journey through life will be determined.

They will all be presented to Allah the Almighty in order that the reward for their deeds in the world shall reach them, be it good, or be it evil.

This is the promise of truth which all the prophets had warned their people of, the Day when all faithful believers will receive their reward and when all the rejected faiths will receive their punishment.

Today, is the life of work, not of reward, but tomorrow is the day of reward not work.

The believer knows well that this world is not our eternal abode, rather it is a place of work and of trial. We are, no matter how long we are present in it; only passers-by in this fleeting world, on our way to success and happiness or on our way to failure and misery.

Belief in the Last Day has a deep effect on people’s lives, for it gives us our strongest motive to be vigilant about the correctness of our actions and the sincerity of our intentions.

Thus, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Charity is proof.”

That is to say, charity is the proof of one’s faith, because when a person gives something, he loses a lively benefit of the world, but the believer knows that Allah will multiply tomorrow the reward of his charity at the Day of Resurrection, and will give him many times over what he may seem to have lost.

If we were to draw a comparison between someone who believes in the Last Day and another who does not, we would find the first to be a person who is dedicated in doing good and who is careful to avoid what is forbidden, since doing forbidden things will harm his next life.

In contrast, while we would find the second one absorbed in his own desires. The first person finds strength in his belief in the Last Day, strength to go on and to persevere in the face of the hardships and tribulations of the world, hoping always to be rewarded for his patience and perseverance in Paradise.

The person who denies the Last Day will be impatient and easily upset, since this world to him is a Paradise when he gets what he wants, or a Hell when his desires are frustrated. His world is at once Paradise and Hell.

For this reason, effective belief in the Last Day is one of the greatest causes of psychological security, peacefulness, and self-confidence, and one of the greatest sources of patience before whatever hardships and trials a person may be faced with in this life.

The Qur'anic CONCERN FOR the Last Day

The concern of the Qur'an about the Last Day is evident from its treatment of the life of the world. A few verses will be enough to illustrate this point:

“Whatever thing you have been given is but the joy of the worldly Life, but what Allah has is better and more lasting for those who have believed and rely upon their Lord.” (42:36)

“Every soul will taste death, and you will only be given your [full] reward compensation on the Day of Resurrection. So he who is drawn away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise has already attained successfulness. For the life of this world is nothing but an enjoyment of delusion.” (3:185)

“Say, ‘The enjoyment of this world is little, but the Hereafter is better for him who fear, and you will not be wronged a bit.’ (4:77)

“You want the commodities of this world, while Allah wants the Hereafter, and Allah is Almighty, Wise.” (8:67)

“But you prefer the life of this world, While the Hereafter is better and more lasting” (87:16).

“And they are happy with the worldly life, while the worldly life is nothing – compared with the Hereafter but little enjoyment.” (13:26)

Allah has considered preoccupation with this world and heedlessness of the next world to be one of the greatest sources of error and reasons for descent to bestiality. Allah said,

“Those who prefer the worldly life of This World over than the Hereafter, and avert [people] from the way of Allah and wish to make it crooked, those are far astray.” (14:3)

And He said,
***“And leave those who take their religion as amusement
and diversion, and whom the life of This Worldly life has
deluded.”*** (6:70)

And He said:
***“Those who do not expect the meeting with Us and
are satisfied with the life of This world, and feel secure
therein and who are heedless of Our signs.”*** (10:7)

And He related the story of the believer from Pharaoh’s
people, saying,
***“O My people, this worldly life is only [temporary]
enjoyment, and indeed the Hereafter that is the home of
[permanent] settlement.
‘Whoever does an evil deed will only be repaid by the like
of it, but whoever does righteousness, whether male or
female, while he is a believer, those will enter Paradise,
where they’ll be given provision without account.’*** (40:39-
40)

He has predicated belief in Allah upon it saying:
***“The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those
who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and establish
prayers, and give the poor-tax [zakah] and feared none
but Allah.”*** (9:18)

And He said,
***“If you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the
Messenger if you [truly] believe in Allah and the Last
Day.”*** (4:59) and also:

***“That is an warning to him among you who
believes in Allah and the Last Day*** (22:32),

And Allah quoted the prophet Shu-aib, who said to his people:
***“My people, worship Allah, and be hopeful for the Last
Day.”*** (29:36)

Thus you can see that there is no subject discussed in the
Qur’an that does not bring you to a mention of the Last Day.
Despite this, most people are neglectful of the Last Day.

The Prophet's concern for the Last Day

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Be in the world as if you are a stranger or a wayfarer.”⁽¹¹⁶⁾ He gave a fantastic example of the difference between the two states saying, “The world compared to the hereafter is as one who dips his fingers into the sea and beholds let him see what his finger takes from it”⁽¹¹⁷⁾

The punishment of the hereafter is more severe and enduring and likewise, the reward of the hereafter is more excellent and enduring.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “One of the people of Hell who used to lead a life of ease and rejoice, will be brought forward on the Day of Resurrection, he will be given a small dip in the Fire of Hell only once, and then he will be asked, ‘Son of Adam, did you see any good in the world, did you happen by any comfort at all?’ He will say, ‘No, by Allah, none.’ And the one of the people of Paradise who used to live a most miserable life before will be brought and put in Paradise for a moment. He will be asked, ‘Oh son of Adam, did you see any misery in the world, did you happen by any hardship at all?’ and he will say, ‘No, by Allah, I came across no misery at all there and saw no hardship.’”⁽¹¹⁸⁾

A single taste of Hell was enough to cause the disbeliever to forget all he had of enjoyment in the world and an instant dip in Paradise was enough to make the believer forget all the bitterness and hardship of his earthly life.

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned⁽¹¹⁹⁾ that Allah would say to the disbeliever on the Day of Resurrection, “Do you see if you had the like of the world full of gold, would you ransom yourself with it today?” He will say “Yes.” Then Allah will say to him, “You have been asked what is easier than this, that you associate none with Me, and you will not go to Hell. But you refused but to commit *shirk*.”

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Bukhari, 6146

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Muslim, 2858

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Muslim, 2808

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Muslim, 2805

Good deeds are the account of the believer by which he is redeemed. It will be the currency of the Day of Resurrection. Gold and silver will be of no use on that day. It is not surprising then to find those who believe in the Last Day competing to do good works.

They do not do this for the good of this fleeting world but rather hope to find salvation and success in the pleasure of their Lord and to earn their reward from Him in the hereafter. Because of this it has been said, "The world is the farm of the hereafter." All the good deeds you plant in the world will bear their fruits in the hereafter.

Who are the bankrupt?

The worst kind of person is the broken or spendthrift, not the spendthrift who loses his money, but the real and worst spendthrift is he who squanders the good deeds he has gained in life, giving them away on the Day of Resurrection to those whom he had wronged, for the currency that people will have to deal with tomorrow to pay their debts is not dollars or pounds but good deeds or bad deeds?

The Prophet said, "Do you know who the spendthrift is?" The people around him said, "The spendthrift among us is the one who has no more money." He said, "The spendthrift is the one who comes on the Day of Resurrection with good deeds as mountains, who comes with prayer, fasting and charities, but who comes while he had insulted this one, and slandered that one and cheated that one, and took the money of that one, and shed blood of that one, and beaten up that one, then this one will take some of his good deed, and that one takes from his good deeds until, when all of his good deeds are used up, even before he has paid everyone what he owes them.

So he takes upon himself their evil deeds. They will be given to him, and he will be thrown into Hell."⁽¹²⁰⁾

The Last Day is divided into:

⁽¹²⁰⁾ Muslim, 2581

- One personal day related to the Last Day a person lived in the world. This is the first stage of several through which the dead pass.
- A common day, which will be the final day on this earth, and this is the second stage.

DEATH

As birth is the way one enters this world, so death is the way one enters the next. The Almighty has said,

“Every soul will taste death. Then to Us you will be returned.” (29:57)

And He said,

“Wherever you be, death will overtake you, even if you are in high-built towers.” (4:78)

When the time of death has come, it will not be possible to delay it even for an instant. Allah has said,

“But never will Allah delay a soul when its time has come. And Allah is well aware with all what you do.”
(63:11)

The critical moments of death

At the very moment of death, angels come to the believer at the last moments of his life, and at the time of his most dire need of comfort and reassurance, angels of mercy descend upon him to give him glad tidings of the mercy of Allah, of His great reward and of Paradise.

An angel sits at his head and gently draws his soul out of his body saying, “Come out O reassured soul to the forgiveness of Allah and His pleasure.”

Allah has said,

“Those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ and then stand straight [remain on a right course], ***the angels come down to them*** [saying] ***‘Don’t fear and do not grieve, but have the good news of Paradise, which you were promised which you were promised. We are your allies in the Life of This World and in the Hereafter, and you will have in it what your souls desire, and you will have in it whatever you ask for, as hospitality from*** [Him who is] ***One All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.”*** (41:30-32)

Then instantly, the fear is vanished and replaced by happiness and gladness and longing to be brought before Allah, Glorious and Mighty.

Whoever desires to meet with Allah, Allah desires to meet Him

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet him. And Whoever hates to meet with Allah, then Allah hates to meet him” Aisha (Prophet’s wife may Allah be pleased with her) said, “What, about hatred of death? All of us hate death.” He said, “Not that. But when the believer is given glad tidings of the mercy of Allah and His pleasure, and of Paradise, he then loves to meet Allah, then Allah loves to meet him. And when the disbeliever is given glad tidings of Allah’s punishment and His wrath, he hates the thought of meeting Allah, then Allah hates to meet him.

In another narration it says, “When the eyes glaze over, and the chest seizes up, and the skin begins to tingle, and the fingers become stiff, then whoever likes to meet Allah, Allah likes to meet him and whoever hates to meet Allah, Allah hates to meet him.”¹²¹

Then the angels descend upon the disbeliever to give him tidings of Allah's anger and of the torment of Hell. An angel will sit at his head to extract his soul, and says “O evil soul, come out from the evil body.”

He will pull it as hardly until it will tear out his nerves and roots, then the soul will come out as the most foul smelling thing in existence.

“If you could but see, when the wrongdoers are in the overwhelming pangs of death while the angels extend their hands, saying, ‘Discharge your souls. Today you are awarded the punishment of [extreme] humiliation for what you used to say against Allah other than the truth, and [that] you were toward His verses arrogant.’ (6:93)

Punishment and Reward in the Grave

¹²¹ (Narrated by Bukhari 6508 & Muslim 2683).

The grave is a narrow hole, and a fate that awaits all of us from
which there is no escape.
Each day brings us closer to the grave. The mere thought of the
grave causes the breasts of some people to narrow. The mind
recoils from the thought of it.

But, whether people remind themselves of this fact, or banish it
from their minds, the grave lies waiting before us. Whether we like
it or not, we are pushed to it. It will be either a small plot of the
Garden of Paradise, or a small pit of the Fire of Hell.

The Period of *Barzakh* ⁽¹²²⁾

People go through a period after death called "*al-barzakh*"
This begins after death and continues until the moment of
resurrection. At this time Allah will cause all of His creatures to
arise and be called to account.

***“Until when death comes upon one of them, he says, ‘My
Lord, send me back, so that I might do righteousness in
what I have neglected!’ No! It is only a word he is saying,
and behind them is a barrier (barzakh) until the day they
are resurrected.”*** (23:99)

And Allah said about Pharaoh,
***“Hellfire, to which they are exposed to it morning and
evening. And when the day of doom comes, [it will be
said], ‘Make the people of Pharaoh enter the harshest
punishment.’”*** (40:46)

***Othman, (a companion) used to weep until his beard was wet
whenever he stood before a grave. It was said to him, “You
remember Paradise and Hell, yet you don't weep, but this brings
tears to your eyes.” He said, “The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘The grave is
the first of the stations of the hereafter. One who passes it
successfully, everything after it is easier, but if you do not pass it
successfully, everything after it is worse.’” And he also used to
say; “I never saw anything more frightening than the grave.”*** ¹²³

⁽¹²²⁾. Interval between death and resurrection.

¹²³ (Ahmad and Abu Daud, see *Mishkat ul-masabih*, hadith no. 132).

Test and torment of the Grave

The Prophet ﷺ said, "These people are tested in their graves. If it was not for the reason that you would stop burying your dead, I would've asked Allah to let you hear the torment that I hear." Then he said, "Seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the grave." The companions said, "We seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the grave."¹²⁴

The torment in the grave follows the questioning that happens there. Allah will send two angels to the deceased after his burial and they will ask him four things: Who is your Lord? What is your religion? What is your Book? And, What do you say about that man who was sent to you? (Meaning the Prophet Muhammad).

These questions seem easy enough to answer now, and indeed they are. But Allah is the One who will cause the believer to be able to answer them, just as He will prevent the disbeliever from answering them, due to his practice in the world and who did not take any notice of these things before his death. Those who are questioned will not benefit from the prompting of others who urge them to answer correctly.

An innovation that must be abandoned

Confirmation of belief, before Allah, comes from the source of one's deeds, not from the prompting of others. Those who shout out to the dead after they are buried in their graves and say, "When the two angels come to you and ask who is your Lord, then tell them: He is Allah! "This is an innovation, (*bid'ah*) an addition to the law of Allah, and a thing unknown to the Prophet and useless to anyone, What would the prompters do to the one whom Allah wants to turn away from giving the answers of which he was turning away from practicing in life!

Allah said,

¹²⁴ (Transmitted by Muslim 2867).

“Allah keeps firm those who believe with the firm word in the Life of This World and in the Hereafter. And Allah sends wrongdoers astray, and Allah does what He wills.” (14:27)

The Prophet ﷺ said that this was revealed about the torment in the grave, when one is asked, "Who is your Lord?" He would say "My Lord is Allah and my prophet is Muhammad." ¹²⁵

When the believer answers the angels correctly, the angels will say "We knew that this was going to be your answer" and a voice calls out from the heavens saying, "My servant has spoken the truth. Prepare for him a place in Paradise, and clothe him the garments of Paradise, and open for him a door to Paradise." Its scent will reach him there and his grave will be made as wide as the eye can see and it will be filled with light. He will be told, "Behold your place in Fire of Hell, Allah has exchanged it for a place in Paradise." He will say, "Let me return to my family to tell them about this." He will be told, "Sleep as a newlywed sleeps, nothing awakens him other than the most beloved of people to him."

As for the disbeliever, if he is asked he does not reply, but rather he says, "Ha, ha, I don't know. I heard people saying things and so I used to say like them." Then a voice will call out from the heavens that he has lied, so furnish his grave from Hellfire, and open a door for him to Hell. Then it will come to him some of its heat and its poison, and his grave will tighten around him and the earth will be told to squeeze him until his ribs cross over one another. It will be shown on him his place in Hellfire then he will say, "Oh Lord, let not the final hour come. Oh Lord, let not the final hour come."

The mention of the grave used to narrow his heart, and upset him. It was disgusting at that state but he is now happy with this and wants this to be his eternal abode, since despite the punishment he finds there, the darkness and the terrible pressure of the earth, it is still more comfortable for him than the hellfire he sees before him.

¹²⁵ (Bukhari and Muslim).

Then Allah will place over him an angel armed with an iron bar. The angel will hit him with this once, and with such force that it would turn a mountain to dust. All creation will hear the sound of this blow except for mankind and jinn.⁽¹²⁶⁾

Those ho believe in the Unseen

We believe in what the sources related about punishment and reward of the deceased in the place called *barzakh*. It does not matter whether he has been buried in the earth, or eaten by wild beasts, or drowned in the sea. The fact is that this state comes to his body and to his soul. Indeed, whoever has not been eaten by wild beasts or drowned in the sea will be eaten by worms in his grave. So what difference does it make if someone is eaten by wild animals or by worms?

As for the soul, after it has left the body it will be either in a state of pleasure or of pain. It is not like the philosophers have suggested, that the punishment of the grave will be felt like a dream state or nightmare and that the Resurrection will be a Resurrection of the spirit and not of the body.

Such positions contradict what we have been told by Allah via His Messenger. The Prophet ﷺ has informed us that punishment of the grave is a fact and that the body will feel the pain of it. Two angels will let the deceased sit, and one of them will hit him with such a force as to turn him to dust. Then the earth will tighten around him until his ribs cross over him.

These people do not realize that the grave is another world, with its own nature and its own laws. It is a world different from ours. We must believe in it and not depend upon reason to delve into its nature, since our minds have neither experience of the Hereafter nor of its nature. If we were to try to apply the nature and rules of our world to it we would not be able to get a correct understanding of it.

Examples of the punishment of the grave

Al-Bukhari and Muslim have related an example of the punishment of the grave, saying that the Prophet ﷺ passed by two

⁽¹²⁶⁾ Abu Daud, *Mishkat al-Misabih*, this is *isnad is hassan*.

graves, the occupants of which were being tormented. He said,
“They are punished, and they are not punished for a big thing.”
Then he said, “Yes, indeed it is big. One of them used to urinate
and did not bother to protect himself from his urine, and the other
used to pass around malicious gossip”

The Day of Resurrection

Before the Day of Reckoning, while man is in a state of disbelief and confusion, the sun will rise from the west. Allah will send a strong wind and anyone with even an atom's weight of faith in his heart will die in it. At this point no one will be left on earth to say 'There is no god but Allah.' The Hour will not be witnessed other than by the worst of creation. Those who know no goodness and who denounce no evil. They run headlong into evil and wickedness and assault all goodness and nobility. When people see these two signs of the coming of the Hour they will indeed believe, but such faith will not benefit them on this day and no repentance will be accepted from them. Allah has said,

“At that day when some of the signs of your Lord come, belief then will not benefit any soul which did not used to believe before or earn any good by its belief. Say, [to them Muhammad] ‘Wait’ for We are [too] waiting.” (6:158)

No one knows when the Hour will come. No Prophet and no angel know this.

“They ask you [Muhammad] about the Hour, when is its arrival. Say, ‘its Knowledge is only with my Lord, none will reveal its time except Him. It lays heavily upon the heavens and the earth. It will not come to you except suddenly’. They question you as if you are familiar with it. Say, its Knowledge is with Allah only, but most of people know not.” (7:187)

And in another verse,

“They ask you [Muhammad] concerning the hour. When is it appointed? In what [position] are you that you should mention it? To Your Lord is its finality, you are only a Warner for those who fear it. It will be at the Day they see it, as if they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof.” (79:42-46)

Gabriel asked the Prophet ﷺ when the Hour would come. He said, “The one who is asking is not more knowledgeable than the one who is asked.”⁽¹²⁷⁾ That is to say, neither the questioner nor the one being questioned knew when it would be.

The Prophet could only mention some things of its coming.

Signs of the Hour

The signs of the Hour and the things that must happen before its coming are divided into two sets of events. These are the lesser signs and the greater signs.

The Lesser Signs

1. The estrangement of the Muslims from Islam. The *sunnah* (Prophet’s way) will become in the sight of many as *bid’a* (innovation), and *bid’a* will become to others as *sunnah*, and people will consider those who observe the *sunnah* vigilantly to be strange and twisted. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Islam began as a strange thing and it will again become strange, as it began.”⁽¹²⁸⁾ This prediction is another sign of the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ for adherence to the *sunnah* has come to be considered a strange thing in our times. Those who observe it closely are said to be strict or fanatical or extremist or any of a number of odd epithets that Satan urges peoples to say.

Islam will return to Madina, the place from whence it came.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Islam will take refuge in Madina as a snake takes refuge in its lair.”⁽¹²⁹⁾ This will be after the Muslims denounce the fundamental principles of their faith, drink alcohol, after giving it a different name, such as “the mother of joy” and they follow the path of the Jews and the Christians before them.

And “a day will come when people will not be concerned with what comes to them, whether it is *haram* or *halal*.”⁽¹³⁰⁾

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Narrated by Muslim The book of faith *Iman*. No. 8.

⁽¹²⁸⁾ Muslim, 145.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ Bukhari, 1876.

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Bukhari, 2059.

2. Nevertheless, a group of the nation of Muhammad ﷺ will hold on to the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ and will not be swept along by the things that people do, following their own desires and innovations, destroying themselves with them. The Prophet ﷺ said, “A group of my nation will remain firmly in the truth, those who forsake them will not harm them, until the command of Allah comes and thus they shall be.”⁽¹³¹⁾ That is to say that the corruption of people will not harm them and neither will people’s accusations against them of strictness and extremism and whatever other names Satan inspires, trying to divert them from the path of truth.

3. A woman will give birth to her mistress.⁽¹³²⁾
4. You will see barefooted, naked, destitute shepherd people, competing to build tall buildings.
5. People will compete to ornament mosques. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come until people compete in ornamenting mosques.”⁽¹³³⁾
6. Money will be super-abundant, to the point that a man will be given a hundred Dinars (old golden currency) and he will leave them aside in contempt.⁽¹³⁴⁾
7. The lands of the Arabs will become green fields and rivers, as they were before.⁽¹³⁵⁾
8. The Euphrates River will reveal a mountain of gold.⁽¹³⁶⁾
9. There will be a Great War between two adversaries, both supporting the same cause.⁽¹³⁷⁾

⁽¹³¹⁾ Muslim, 1925.

⁽¹³²⁾ Bukhari, 50. This means that the unruly child will overcome her mother to the point that it seems she is the mother and the mother is the child.

⁽¹³³⁾ Abu Daud, 475.

⁽¹³⁴⁾ Bukhari, 3176.

⁽¹³⁵⁾ Muslim.

⁽¹³⁶⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽¹³⁷⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

10. There will be a Great War that will enter every Arab household.⁽¹³⁸⁾
11. A war between the Muslims and the Jews. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come before you fight the Jews.”⁽¹³⁹⁾
12. There will be a truce between the Arabs and the Sons of the West.⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ This truce will soon be broken when they come to attack the Muslims [marching] under eighty banners, and under every banner twelve thousand [men].⁽¹⁴¹⁾
13. A frenetic passing of events. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come before times are brought close together.”⁽¹⁴²⁾
14. In the Last Days three false prophets will appear, each claiming prophethood as the Prophet ﷺ has said.⁽¹⁴³⁾
15. There will be a great increase in earthquakes, landslides, and deformities as a result of the [Muslim] nation’s permitting of alcohol, singing girls, wild revelry, licentiousness and the abandonment of family ties. The Prophet ﷺ said, “There will be in the end of time landslides and disasters and deformities, with the appearance of revelry and singing girls and when alcohol is made permissible.”⁽¹⁴⁴⁾
16. Corruption will spread among people to the point that a man will meet a woman in the middle of the road and people will say, “If they do it aside it would be better.” When people openly engage in illicit sex Allah will send to them diseases and famines that have never been known before. Thus we have today a confirmation of the words of the Prophet ﷺ as people do openly engage in illicit sex and Allah sent them diseases which their fathers never knew, such as AIDS.
17. There will be a great fire in the Hijaz.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

⁽¹³⁸⁾ Bukhari, 1763.

⁽¹³⁹⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ The *hadith* says *bani Asfar*, which Ibn Hajar al-Askalani glosses as *Room*, the usual term for Byzantine Romans in Arabic. The Byzantines also called themselves “Romans,” even though they spoke Greek. *OJ*.

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ Bukhari, 3176.

⁽¹⁴²⁾ Bukhari, 7121.

⁽¹⁴³⁾ Al-Tirmidhi, 2219.

⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ Al-Tabarani and al-Tirmidhi, (3559).

⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

18. Knowledge will be withheld and there will be no scholars, and ignorance will spread among the people and the foolish will occupy the seats of learning. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come before knowledge is lost.”⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ And he said, “Allah does not remove knowledge by taking it away from the scholars, rather he will remove the scholars. When one scholar is left, the people will take a fool to pass judgments for them in ignorance. They will lead astray and be led astray and they will destroy others and be destroyed.”⁽¹⁴⁷⁾

19. The reigns of power will be given to people totally unsuited to govern. The Prophet ﷺ said, “When power is bestowed to those not meant to govern, then wait in anticipation of the Hour.”⁽¹⁴⁸⁾

20. Commitments and responsibilities will not be upheld. The Prophet ﷺ said, “When commitments are not upheld, then wait in anticipation of the Hour.”⁽¹⁴⁹⁾

21. There will be much violence and bloodshed. The murderer will not know why he has killed, and the slain will not know why he was slain. The

Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come before... violence appears with much commotion, and a man passing by a grave will say, ‘Would that I was in his place.’”⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ For this reason he urged us to hurry and do good works before the time of violence comes and we are prevented from this. He said, “Rush to good deeds, (before you are overtaken by) *fitnas* (trials or troubles) as parts of dark night, (during that stormy period) a man would be a believer in the morning, and an unbeliever in the evening, or he would be a believer in the evening and unbeliever in the morning, and would become ready to sell his faith for some small benefit in the

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Bukhari, 36.

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Bukhari, 100

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Bukhari, 59.

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ *Ibid.*

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

world.”⁽¹⁵¹⁾ So we should rush to do good works before these very hard times reach us, times that will turn people to disbelief when they were believers before.

22. The Hour will be on a Friday. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come other than on a Friday.”⁽¹⁵²⁾

⁽¹⁵¹⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.
⁽¹⁵²⁾ Muslim, 854.

The Greater Signs

1. An emission of smoke. Allah, Most High, has said, “So wait for a day when the sky will bring a clear smoke, covering people.” (44:10). By this smoke Allah will take the spirits of the disbelievers. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Hour will not come before you see ten signs,” and he mentioned smoke and the Anti-Christ.⁽¹⁵³⁾

2. The appearance of the *Mahdi*. *Hadith* about the *Mahdi* are *sahih* and these inform us that he will be a descendant of the Prophet ﷺ and one who follows his way. He will fill the earth with justice as it had been filled with injustice. The Prophet ﷺ said, “When but a day of the age of the world is left, Allah will send a man from my house who will fill it with fairness and justice as it had been filled with tyranny and injustice. He will rule for seven years.” And in a different narration, “His name will be my name and the name of his father, the name of my father.”

3. The appearance of the Anti-Christ, who will claim divinity and bring great tribulation. Many will follow him into falsehood. The Prophet ﷺ used to warn against the trials of the *Dajjal*, or Anti-Christ, and seek Allah’s protection from them after every prayer. His appearance and his being followed by the majority of people will be the fruits of their disbelief and corruption on earth. He will appear with two rivers, one of which people will see flowing with fire and the other with white water.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “He will come with a river which looks like fire. It will become dark and he will lower his head to it and drink from it and it will be cool water.”⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ The trials of the *Dajjal* will last for forty days. He will command the sky and it will bring forth-green plants and he will command the earth and it will bring forth its treasures. This will continue until Jesus slays him and

⁽¹⁵³⁾ Muslim, 2901

⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Muslim, 2239

relieves people of his evil. Our Prophet ﷺ has commanded us to teach our children, from the first generation to the last, the ten signs given in *Surat al-Kahf*, the 18th Sura of the Qur'an, so that the tribulation of the Anti-Christ will not touch them.⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ Among his signs is a mark between his eyes in the form of the word *kafir*, which all believers will see.

4. The appearance of Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Ma'juj).

Allah said,
“*Until when [the dam of] Gog and Magog has been opened, and they from every elevation, descend.*” (21:96).

That is to say, they hurry to corruption in the earth. The Qur'an mentions that they exist on the earth without indicating to us anything about their location. The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah would “send Yajuj and Ma'juj and [their people] will be everywhere. The first of them will come to Lake Tabaraya⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ and drink up all its water. Others will come after them and say, “There was once water here.”⁽¹⁵⁷⁾

5. The descending of Jesus. He will reappear in the world, not as a Messenger of Allah, but as a follower of the law of our Prophet ﷺ who said, “By He in Whose hand lies my soul, you will long for the Son of Mary to come as a just ruler. He will break the cross and slay the swine, put an end to war, and money will be so abundant that no one will accept charity, and a single prostration then will be worth more than the world and all it contains.”⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Another *hadith* says, “He will put an end to *jizya*... hatred, loathing and jealousy will vanish.”⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

The meaning of “put an end to *jizya*” here is that people will either choose Islam or the sword. No one will agree to pay *jizya*,

⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ Bukhari, 7131.

⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ A lake in northern Palestine, near Golan and Galilee.

⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Muslim, 2937.

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Bukhari, 2222 and 3448.

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Muslim, 155.

the tax on non-Muslims. By the hand of Jesus, Almighty Allah will destroy the Antichrist and the people of *Gog and Magog*. Some of them will accept Jesus' call and then they will all be destroyed.⁽¹⁶⁰⁾

6. Humanity will return to the ancient ignorance and to *shirk*, and a party of the Muslim nation will follow

them. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The Hour will not descend upon other than the worst of creation,"⁽¹⁶¹⁾ and he said, "The Hour will not descend until tribes from my nation join the idolaters and worship idols."⁽¹⁶²⁾

7. The sun will rise from the west, as it sets. Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Hour will not descend until the sun rises from the west. When it does, and the people see it, then they will all believe, but at that time faith will not avail anyone who had not believed before or earned some good by their faith."⁽¹⁶³⁾

7. A Beast will appear and dazzle man and Allah will make it speak. Allah said, "*And when the word [decree] is fulfilled upon them, We will bring forth for them a beast from the earth speaking to them that people were, of Our verses in doubt.*" (27:82)

The Sounding of the Trumpet

When the time of the Resurrection has come, Allah will command the angel to sound the trumpet. Everyone who hears it will swoon and fall down dead on the spot. On that day Allah will transform the earth into a place much different from the place we are accustomed to. Allah said,

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Muslim, 2938.

⁽¹⁶¹⁾ Muslim, 2949.

⁽¹⁶²⁾ Abu Daud (*sahih*), 3072.

⁽¹⁶³⁾ Bukhari, 4635.

“On that day, the earth will be replaced to become a different earth, and the heavens [as well], and they [people] will appear before Allah, the One, the Prevailing.” (14:48)

Then the trumpet will sound a second time. After all mankind has died Allah will command the angel to sound the trumpet and all living things will swoon and then all life on earth will perish, and Allah, who does not die, alone shall remain. Then the angel will sound the trumpet yet again and man will rise again. Allah said,

“And the Horn will be blown, then whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will faint [swoon], except whomever Allah wills. Then it will be blown again, and then they will all be standing waiting! And the earth will shine with the light of its Lord, and the Book [record of deeds] will be placed, and the prophets and the witnesses will be brought, and it will be judged between them in truth, and they will not be wronged. And every soul will be fully compensated [for] what it did, and He is most knowing of what they do.”
(39:70)

The Sounding of the Resurrection

The first blast is called ‘the swooning blast’ and the second blast is ‘the Resurrection blast.’ At the second blast mankind will rise again. Allah will bring back all of the dead and they will rise from their graves for the Lord of all Beings and be gathered, barefooted, naked and uncircumcised before their Creator, just as they were first created. No one will notice anyone else, so grave will be the situation, and everyone will be absorbed in himself asking only for safety and deliverance. Allah has said,

“And the Horn will be blown, then whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will faint [swoon], except whomever Allah wills. Then it will be blown again, and then they will all be standing waiting! And the earth will shine with the light of its Lord, and the Book [record of deeds] will be placed, and the prophets

and the witnesses will be brought, and it will be judged between them in truth, and they will not be wronged. And every soul will be fully compensated for] what it did, and He is most knowing of what they do.” (39:68)

And He said,

“And the Horn will be blown, and at once they will swarm from the graves to their Lord. They will say, "O, woe to us! Who has raised us from our place of sleep? [The reply will be], “This is what the Merciful One had promised, and the truth the messengers had spoken truly.”

*It is no more than one blast, and at once they are all brought present before Us!
So this day [of judgement], no soul will be wronged a bit, nor will you be rewarded except for what you used to do.”*
(36:51-54)

Evidence of THE Resurrection and the Ruling on Those Who Deny It

A Muslim bears witness that the Resurrection is truth simply because Allah has informed us of it. It is only the natural consequence of justice that those who are wronged should get satisfaction for the injustice they have suffered. Otherwise, If there were no such day of judgment when the unjust would be tasting the fruits of his injustice and the oppressed would be given back his right, then the oppressive would become better than the oppressed one since he violated others' rights and died after benefiting from his unjust behavior. In that case, falsehood would prevail over truth.

But this is not the way things are. Allah has appointed a Day when the unjust will receive the fruits of their injustice and the just will receive the fruits of their justice. Belief in the Resurrection is a natural consequence of belief in the Majesty, the Justice and the Wisdom of Allah. The sound mind will bear witness to this fact. The healthy soul will find reassurance in it.

Therefore the Prophet ﷺ has said, “You will certainly render all people what they are owed on the Day of Resurrection.”⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ If people were not given what they are owed in this world, and not in the hereafter, when would they receive their just due? Could such an injustice be permitted?

(164) Muslim, 3582

The Corruption of Denying the Resurrection

Denial of the Resurrection corrupts a number of beliefs:

First, it attributes injustice to Allah, since both the author of injustice and its victim would die without the victim receiving his rights.

Second, it attributes a lie to Allah and to His messengers, because we have known about that Day by the revelation of Allah to His messengers, for there has been no messenger but he warned his people of the Day of Reckoning.

Third, one who denies the Resurrection must believe that the existence of the universe is in itself a mere sport and joy. Allah has explained in the Qur'an that those who deny the Resurrection will not see any value for the creation of this world, Allah said,

“Did you ever think that We created you uselessly and that you would not be returned to Us? High is Allah (above that), the King, the Truth. There is no god but Him, the Lord of the Noble Throne.”
(23:116)

Denial of the wisdom of Allah and the thought that He creates for jest is blasphemy. No Prayer and fasting and belief in the messengers and the Books of Allah will benefit such a person.

Allah said,

“The disbelievers have claimed that they will not be resurrected. Say [Muhammad], ‘Yes, by my Lord! You will certainly be resurrected and then you will be informed of what you did, and that is easy for Allah.’” (64:7)

Allah, the Almighty, has not created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain except in truth. The Resurrection of this creation is easily within the power of Allah. How else when He said,

***“Your creation and your resurrection will not be but
like that of a single soul.” (31:28)***

And He said,
***“The creation of the heavens and the earth is greater
than the creation of mankind, but most people do not
know” (40:57).***

And He said,
***“Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth
able to create the likes of them? Yes, indeed, and He
is the Supreme All-Knowing Creator.
His command when He wants anything that He only
says to it, ‘Be!’ and it is.
So glory be to Him in Whose hand is the Kingdom of
Everything! And to Him you will be returned.”***
(36:81-83)

How Some People will be resurrected

The resurrection varies from person to person: Those who die during Hajj and are still in *ihram*, not having completed the rites of the Pilgrimage, will be brought back pronouncing the *talbiah*. They will die in a state of *Ihram* and so the restrictions of *ihram* will continue to apply to them. They must not be dressed in any sewn garments and neither their faces nor their heads should be covered. Allah will reply to their souls in response to the *talbiah*, (Here I come to You, my Lord, and here I am).

Ibn Abbas related that a man who attended the Pilgrimage at Arafat with the Prophet ﷺ fell off his mount, broke his neck [and died]. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Wash him and cover him in his garments and do not cover his face or his head for he will be resurrected on the Day of Rising pronouncing the *talbiah*.”⁽¹⁶⁵⁾

Those who used to take *riba*⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ will be brought back on the Day of Resurrection in a state of insanity, as one who is brought on by the touch of Satan. Allah has said, “***Those who take usury will not be standing*** [at the Day of Resurrection] ***but as one who stands while being beaten by Satan into insanity*** [a touch that drives him to madness]” (2:275)

The proud deniers of the Day of Resurrection will be brought back as eyewitnesses to what they used to deny. Allah has said, “***It is only one shout*** [the Horn], ***then at once they will be observing.***” (37:19)

And their hearts will be filled with sorrow and regret and they will say, “***O, Woe to us! This is the Day of recompense.***” Then Allah will say to them,

⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ Interest on money.

***“This is the Day of Decision which you used to deny,
gather those who did wrong with their [similar]
kinds, and what they used to worship instead of
Allah, and guide them to the path to Hell, And stop
them, they must be [today] questioned. What is wrong
with you? Why do you not help one another?”
No. But this day they are lowly submissive. (37:19)***

They will feel the most profound regret but their regret will not help them on that day. They will say,

***“Woe unto us! Who’s raised us from our place [of
death]? (36:51)***

Then it will be said to them:

***“This is what the Merciful One promised, and what
the messengers were speaking about in truth. Surely,
It is no more than one blast. Then they are all
summoned before Us!
Then, at that day, no soul will be wronged a bit, nor
will you be rewarded except for what you used to do.”
(36:52)***

They used to say in the world derisively,

***“It is only our life of this worldly life. We die and
live, and we won't be resurrected.” (23:37)***

And they say with full astonishment,

***“When we have died and become dust and bones, will
we then be resurrected? (23:82)***

Then Allah replies:

***“Say, Yes, and you will be [resurrected and]
humiliated” (37:19).***

The Gathering

Then humanity will all be taken to the great place of assembly where they will stand waiting the judgment of Almighty Allah upon His slaves. This will also be a place of great distress, as the

sun will be brought near and each person will sweat in accordance
to his deeds.

Some will be standing up to their ankles in their own sweats
and others up to their knees while others will be overcome by it as
it reaches over them, even above their heads.

As their distress rises, they will call out to the prophets who
will intercede on their behalf for Allah to have mercy on them and
deliver them from that place.

They will come to Adam and they will say to him, “You are
Adam, the father of creation whom Allah created by His hand and
into whom He breathed His spirit and to whom He ordered the
Angels to prostrate themselves. Intercede for us before your Lord
so that He will deliver us from this place.” He will say, “I cannot.
Go to Noah.” They will go to Noah, who will give them the same
response and send them to another prophet who came after him.

Each will give the same reply until they come to Jesus E who will
tell them, “I cannot. Go to Muhammad, a slave who was forgiven
his sins from the beginning until the end.” All of the prophets will
say, “My Lord is more angry today than He has ever been before
and than He will ever be again.”

They will come to Muhammad E and say, “O Muhammad, you
are the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. Allah has
forgiven you your sins from the beginning to the end. Intercede for
us before your Lord. Do you not see the state we are in?” [And he
will say] “I am for it, I am for it.”⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ He will intercede before
Allah and fall down in prostration before the Throne.

He said, “They will come to me and ask leave of my Lord and I
will be given leave and I will arrive beneath the Throne, and when
I see it surely I will fall down prostrating before my Lord. Then
Allah will bless me and praise me in a way that none have been
blessed or praised ever before, and as Allah wishes I should be
called, “O Muhammad, raise your head. Speak, you shall be heard.
Ask, and you shall be given. Seek intercession, intercession shall
be granted.”

⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

The Prophet ﷺ will raise his head and say, "O Lord, my nation, my nation" and he will say, "O Lord, pardon for me those who said, *la ilaha illallah*, there is no god but Allah." Allah will say, "You may not seek this, but by My Glory, and by My Majesty, and by My Greatness I will deliver those who said 'There is no god but Allah.'"⁽¹⁶⁸⁾

On that day each person will see all that he had done in the world and he will be given a written record of all his deeds. Allah said,

"On that day We will gather the righteous [Godfearing] to the Merciful [Allah] as a delegation. And will drive the criminals to Hell in thirst. None will have the power to intercede except he who had made a covenant with the Merciful" (19:85-87).

And He said,
"And on that day We will remove the mountains, and you will see the earth prominent [bare and exposed], and We will gather them and not leave behind from them anyone. And they will be presented before your Lord in rows, [saying to them] "You have returned to Us just as [naked as] We created you the first time, while you used to claim that We would not be making an appointment for you. And the book (of their deeds) will be placed [open], and you will see the criminals afraid of what within it, and they will say, "Woe to us! What a book is this that leaves nothing small or big but it counted it?" And they will find what they did present [before them] and your Lord wrongs no one." (18:47)

And He said,
"This is Our Book [record of deeds] speaks about you by the truth. We were recording what you were doing."

⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Bukhari, 7510 and Muslim 193.

*So as for those who believed and did good deeds,
their Lord will admit them into His mercy. That is the
clear success.*

*But as for those who disbelieved, [it will be said]
"Were not My verses recited to you? But you were
arrogant and became a criminal people." (45:29)*

Those who denied Allah will be brought to the assembly blind,
as Allah said,

*"And whoever turns away from My remembrance⁽¹⁶⁹⁾,
he will have a depressed [narrow] life, and We will
gather him blind on the Day of Resurrection."*

*He will say, "My Lord, why have you gathered
[raised] me blind, while I was sighted?"*

*He will say, "thus Our signs came to you, and you
forgot them, so today you will be forgotten" And thus
we reward whoever has squandered and not believed
in the signs of his Lord, and the punishment of the
Hereafter is more severe and lasting." (20:125-127)*

Those who did not pay *zakat* will be tormented by the wealth
they used to hide from its rightful owners:

*"Those who hoard gold and silver and spend them
not in the way of Allah, give them news of a painful
punishment.*

*On that day, when it [the gold and silver] will be
heated in fire of Hell, and seared therewith will be
their foreheads, their sides, and their backs it will be
is said], "This is what you hoarded for yourselves. So
taste what you used to hoard." (9:35)*

The Prophet ﷺ said, "No one who owns gold or silver and does
not give its rightful *zakat* (would be spared) but (his hoards) would
be heated in the Fire of Hell. These will be made into plates, and
with these: his sides, and his forehead will be cauterized till Allah
will judge among His servants, during a day, the extent of which
would be of fifty thousand years, Then his matter will be

⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ The words "remembrance" "reminder" "verses" "signs" all mean the
revelation of Allah.

determined by Allah whether to be in Paradise or Hell. And it will be said to him, ‘This is your property which you used to grasp greedily.’⁽¹⁷⁰⁾

The disbelievers will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection with their faces down, blind, deaf and dumb in recompense for their pride and their vanity and for their having forgotten about the

Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

“The disbelievers are in error and madness. On that day they will be dragged into the Fire upon their faces [it will be said to them], “Taste you the touch of Saqar⁽¹⁷¹⁾ [Hell].” (54:48)

And also said.

“ And We will gather them on the Day of Resurrection [fallen] on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf. Their home will be Hellfire, every time it subsides We increase them in blazing fire. That is their recompense because they disbelieved in Our signs and said, “When we become bits and bones, will we be raised as a new creation? Have they not seen that Allah, the One Who created the heavens and the earth is able to create the likes of them, and has set them a term of which there is no doubt? But the wrongdoers refused but to disbelieve.” (17:97-99)

The Prophet ﷺ was once asked by Qatadah – his companion, “O Prophet of Allah, how could the disbelievers be gathered on their faces?” He said, “Is He not the One who made them walk on two legs in the world capable of making them walk on their faces on the Day of Resurrection?”

Qatada said, “Certainly, by the Glory of our Lord!”⁽¹⁷²⁾ The proud and the haughty and the self-glorifying will be gathered on

⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ Bukhari and Muslim 987.

⁽¹⁷¹⁾ Saqar is one of the proper names of Hell.

⁽¹⁷²⁾ Muslim 2806.

the Day of Resurrection like dust loathsomely trampled underfoot,
a reward for their pride and arrogance in the world.

Those who will be shielded on the Day of Resurrection

Several groups of righteous people will be sheltered by the shadow of Allah on the Day when there will be no shade but His, delivering them from the horror and fear and intense heat of that day. Among these will be:

A just ruler,
A youth who grew up worshipping Allah,
A man whose heart is attached to the mosque,
Two men who loved each other for Allah's sake, meeting and parting for Him,
A man who was called upon by a woman of beauty and status and who said to her, 'I fear Allah.'
A man who gave secretly in charity such that his left hand did not know what his right hand had given,
A man who remembered Allah in solitude and whose eyes filled with tears.

Allah will shield them from the things that frighten the hearts of people on the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,
“Those for whom the best [reward] preceded from Us, they are from it [Hell] far removed. They will hear not its sound while they will abide in the place where their souls desire [Paradise]. The greatest day of terror will not sadden them, and the angels will greet them, [saying] ‘This is your Day, which you have been promised.’” (21:102)

The Qur'an describes the condition of each group,
“Whoever comes [at judgment] with a good deed will have better than it, and will be saved from that day of terror. And he who comes with an evil deed, their faces will be overturned into the Fire. [it will be said] Aren't you recompensed except for what you used to do?”
(27:89-90)

Saying that there can be no comparison between the two groups and each may do as they will do. And He said,

“Is he who is thrown into the Fire better, or he who comes secured on the Day of resurrection? Do whatever you will, for He sees all what you do”. (41:40)

And:

“Or do those who commit bad deeds We will make them [equal] like those who have believed and done good deeds? Equal in their life and their death? Bad is what they judge! (45:21).

And:

“Not equal are the companions of Hellfire and the companions of Paradise. The fellows of Paradise are truly the attainers [of success].” (59:20)

And:

“Shall We consider the submissive [Muslims] equal⁽¹⁷³⁾ with the criminals?

What is the matter with you? How you judge!”
(68:35)

The Pool

The Muslims will be brought to the Great Pool of the Prophet ﷺ which will be filled with white milk sweetened with honey, and it will fill cups more numerous than the stars in the sky. It will be fed by a river of Paradise and will be unimaginably large. Suffice it to say that the distance between each of its corners will be a month’s journey, and each time it is drunk from it will become wider.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “My pool is as wide as a month’s journey, its waters are white with milk, it is perfumed with musk and it will fill cups more numerous than the stars in the sky. Who drinks from it will never again know thirst.” Those who practiced innovation (*bid’a*) will not be permitted to drink from it.

The Prophet ﷺ will say, “My people, my people” and he will be told, “You do not know what they began to do after you.” And he will say, “Woe unto them (May they be driven away).⁽¹⁷⁴⁾

⁽¹⁷³⁾ *i.e.* Muslims.

⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

Allah said,

“Whoever worships a thing, follows what he worships. Those who worship the sun follow the sun, and those who worship the moon follow the moon, and those who worship false gods follow false gods. All who worship other than Allah, idols or men (such as Jesus or Ezra), will fall into the fire.”⁽¹⁷⁵⁾

They will not be taken to account for the sins they committed other than their disbelief and worshipping other than Allah, for setting partners with Allah is the greatest sin, sufficient for an eternal abode in Hell Fire.

Worshipping others rather than Allah and denying the messengers is the worst of all sins, and punishment for this is the worst of all punishments.

⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

The Account and the Reward

After the Resurrection of the dead and the gathering of humanity, their deeds will be assessed, accounted for and rewarded. Allah said,

“For to Us will be their Return; Then, upon Us will be their account.” (88:25).

And He said (as the Prophet reported) “My servants, verily, these are your deeds which I recorded for you, then I reward you thereby. Who finds good should praise Allah and who finds other than that should blame no one but himself.”⁽¹⁷⁶⁾

Allah will bring His slaves to stand before Him and will make them aware of their deeds and their words. The pages will fly as

Allah has said,
“And when the pages (records of deeds) are spread out.” (81:10)

Allah is capable of directing each to its destined hand, and each will receive his record without confusion and without mix-up.

Every person will be given his book, either in his right hand if he is to rejoice—such a person may never take his book by his left hand, or in his left hand if he is lost—for such a person may never take his book by his right hand. This will be a miracle all will witness. Allah has said,

“So as for he who is given his record in his right hand, he will say, 'Here, read my book. I was certain that I would be meeting my reckoning.' Then he will be in a pleasant life. In a high garden. Its fruit bunches will be low to be [easy to be picked]. 'Eat and drink at ease for what you sent on before you in past days.' But as for him who is given his record in his left hand will say,

⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ Muslim, 2577.

*"Oh, I wish that I had not been given my record.
And did not know what was my reckoning!
Oh, I wish it [my death] had been the decisive.
My wealth has not availed me.
My power has gone away from me.
[It will be ordered], "take him and shackle him.
"Then drive him in Hellfire.
Then insert him into a chain of seventy cubits long.
For he was neither believing in Allah the Great, nor
he was urging on the feeding of the needy,
Therefore, today he has no close friend, Nor any
food but filth "Which none but sinners eat." (69:19-
29)*

Then they will be taken to the place where they will stay
forever more.

And your Lord wrongs no one.

When we are handed our books and read them, then we will
remember what we used to do in the world.

*“And when the great disaster comes.
On that day, man will remember what he strove for.
And Hell will be exposed visible to him, who sees.
So as for he who transgressed [all bounds].
And preferred the life of the [lowly] world. Then Hell
will be his home.
But as for him who feared the position of his Lord
and restrained his soul from evil desire, then!
Paradise will be his home.” (79:36)*

And He said:

*“At that day Hell will be brought near, and man at that
day will remember! But what is the value of that remembrance?
He will say, ‘I wish that I had sent ahead [some
good] for my life!’
So none punishes as He will punish on that day!
None will be bound as he then will be bound.
You peaceful soul!
Return to your Lord, well pleased and well pleasing
to Him.
Then enter among My worshippers! (89:23-30)*

And He said:

*“On that day those who disbelieved and disobeyed the
Prophet will wish that were [buried and were dust] in
the earth, and they never will they hide a single fact
from Allah!” (4:42)*

Just as Allah quoted the disbeliever as saying in full regret,

*“On that day, man will look at his deeds as to
what his hands have sent forth, and will say, ‘Oh, I
wish I were dust.’” (79:40)*

Another verse,
***“If you could but see when they are made to stand
before the Fire, they will say, ‘Oh, We wish that to be
returned and then we will not deny the signs of our
Lord and we will then be of the believers!’”***
*Indeed there appeared to them what they used to conceal before. But
if they were returned, they would return to what they were forbidden.
For they are truly liars! (6:27)*

He who used to praise his Lord will find his praises counted for
him.
And he who used to pray will find his prayers counted for him.
And he who used to give in charity will find his charity.
And he who used to lie illicitly with others will be repaid, as
will the thief for his theft, the usurer for his devouring of interest,
and the sinner for his misdeeds.
Everyone will be taken to account.
Allah has said,

***“Then he who is given his Record in his Right hand,
will be judges with an easy account, and return to his
people rejoicing!***
***But he who is given his Record behind his back will
he cry for Perdition***
And he will enter a Blazing Fire.” (84:8)

ALLAH COUNTED IT WHILE THEY FORGOT IT

People will be startled by the detail and precision of the account recorded in their books, a record of all what they have done. Just as Allah said,

And the book [of their deeds] will be placed [open], and you will see the criminals afraid of what within it, and they will say, "Woe to us! What a book is this that leaves nothing small or big but it counted it?" And they will find what they did present [before them], and your Lord wrongs no one.” (18:47-49)

“And for every person We have fastened his deeds to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection We will bring out to him a book that he will find wide open. [It will said], "Read your book. This day, Your own soul is sufficient against you as an accountant.”
(17:13-14)

This is the Justice of Allah, for the deeds of men are all linked to this day. Allah said,

“Allah promised those who believed and did good deeds of forgiveness and great reward, and for those who disbelieved and denied Our verses [revelation] to be companions of Hell-fire” (5:9).

The Prophet ﷺ said, “A man will not move one pace forward on the Day of Resurrection before he is asked about four things:
His (age): How he spoiled it.
His youth: How did he spend it.
His money: How he collected it, and on what he had spent it.
His knowledge (of religion): Was he practicing it? ”⁽¹⁷⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ Tirmidhi, (2419).

And he also said, “Each of you will speak to his Lord on the Day of Resurrection and there will be no one between you to relay your words to one another.

You will look to your right and see nothing but your deeds, and you will look before you and see the flames of Hell lapping up in your faces. So, fear Allah if only with the dried covering of a date-stone.”⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ By this he meant that if you gave even the dried cover of a date-stone in charity, it would help to push back the fires of Hell from you.

⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

Ways of Reckoning on the Day of Resurrection

The reckoning will be of two kinds:
An easy reckoning, and a difficult reckoning, as what Allah
says,

***“Then whoever is given his book [of records] in his
right hand He will be judged with an easy account,
and return to his people in joy.***

***But as for he who is given his record behind his
back, he will cry out for destruction, And be thrown
to scorching fire.***

He once lived joyous with his people.

He thought that he would not return [to Allah].

No. Indeed his Lord was always watching him!”

(84:8)

Symbols of easy reckoning

The people of the easy reckoning will be shown their deeds
without being asked about them, but will be given glad
tidings that they are forgiven. Then they will be taken to
Paradise.

The Prophet ﷺ gave us an account of this, saying that Allah
will present a man with his deeds and ask,
“Do you know this sin and that sin? He will say,
“Yes, my Lord.”

This will continue until he has reviewed all his sins and the
man becomes certain that he has perished: Then Allah will
say, “I have covered your sins in the world, but this day I will
forgive them for you.”⁽¹⁷⁹⁾

Then there is the story of the man with the card, a man who was
shown his deeds recorded in ninety-nine books, each of which was
filled with sins as far as the eye could see. Allah says to him:

⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ Ahmad 2: 213 Tirmidhi No. 2639.

“Do you deny any of these sins? Have you been wronged by
 My recording angels?”
 He will say, “No, my Lord.” Allah will ask him,
 “Have you had any excuse? Have you had any good deed?”
 He will say, “No.”
 Allah will say, “Indeed, you do have one good deed, and no
 injustice will be laid upon you this day.”
 Then a card will be brought out for him upon which [is written]
 ‘LA ILAHA ILLALLAAH. (There is no god but Allah and
 Muhammad is His servant and His messenger) as he has said it
 once from his heart.
 He will say, “Oh Lord, what is this card written with these
 words?” He will be told, “No injustice will be over you.
 His record will be placed in one hand of the scale, and the card
 in the other. The hand with ‘There is no God but Allah’ will fall
 (heavier), and the hand with his records of bad deeds will rise
 (lighter)”.⁽¹⁸⁰⁾

Symbols of difficult reckoning

As for those who will be asked and argue about their deeds,
 asked to account for this and to explain that, asked about each of
 their crimes, and who will make excuses and arguments, from
 these, no excuses or arguments will be accepted, and they will be
 destroyed with the rest of those undone by their sins. This is the
 difficult accounting and the one from which no one will escape
 unpunished.

The Prophet ﷺ described the interrogation of a disbeliever on
 the Day of Resurrection. He will be asked,
 “Do you see if you have gold whose weight equals the weight
 of the earth, would you ransom yourself with it?”
 He will say, “Yes.”
 Allah will say, “You were asked for a thing smaller than this:
 not to associate others with Me and so to save yourself from the
 fire, but you insisted (on making partners with Allah)”.
 And as for the man who testifies on his own behalf hoping to
 escape from the punishment of Allah, Allah has said,

⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ Tirmidhi.

“On the Day when every soul will come pleading for of itself, and every soul will be fully compensated for what it did, and they will not be wronged [treated unjustly].” (16:111)

And the sinner will say, “O Allah, I do not accept witnesses against me other than myself.” And Allah will say, “You are today a sufficient witness against yourself,” and the recording angels are witnesses. Then his mouth will be sealed, and it will be said to his limbs “Speak”. His hand will speak and his legs will speak and tell what he used to do. Allah said,

“This day We will seal their mouths, their hands will speak to us, and their feet will bear witness as to what they used to do.” (36:65)

And also said,

“And that day when the enemies of Allah are gathered to the Fire, until when they reach it, their ears, eyes and their skins testify against them about what they used to do.

And they will say to their skins, "Why you have you testified against us?" They will say, "Allah made us speak, He who can make everything speak, and Who created you at first, and to Him will be your return.

“You were not seeking to hide yourselves lest your hearing, your sight and your skins testify against you, but you thought that Allah doesn’t know much of what you do”.

“And that was your assumption which you assumed about your Lord, has ruined you till you became among the losers.

So, [even] if they are patient, Hellfire will be their residence, and if they ask to appease [Allah] they will not be of those who are allowed to appease.” (41:19)

Indeed, the earth itself will bear witness against him recounting how he used to violate Allah’s commands upon it. Allah said,

“When the Earth is shaken with its [final] earthquake.
And the Earth discharges its burdens.
And man says, "What is the matter with it?"
That day it will report its news.
Because your Lord has inspired [commanded] it.
That day, people will depart as groups [separated into categories] to be shown the [results of] their deeds.
Then who ever does an atom's weight of good will see it.
And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.” (99:1-3)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Do you know what the [earth’s] news is?” They said, “Allah and His Messenger know best.” He said, “It is to bear witness to what each of Allah’s slaves and every nation used to do upon it. It will say, ‘He did such and such on such and such a day.’ That is its news.”⁽¹⁸¹⁾

The first thing a person will be asked

The first thing a person will be called to account for is his **true belief** in the oneness of Allah and his sincerity in this belief.

Then he will be asked about **his prayer**. If this was correct, then all of his deeds will have been correct, and if his prayer has been spoiled, then all of his deeds will have been ruined.⁽¹⁸²⁾ The first settling of accounts between people will be that of blood (they shed among one another illegally).⁽¹⁸³⁾

Who will first enter hell

Three types of people will be the first to enter Hell. These were described in a *hadith* reported by Abu Hurairah, who said: “Once the Prophet said to me: The first three people to enter Hell on the Day of Resurrection will be a scholar who has learned the Qur’an by heart, a *mujahid* who was killed in the path of Allah, and a rich man.

⁽¹⁸¹⁾ Ahmad 2/37 and Tirmidhi 3350.

⁽¹⁸²⁾ Al-Tabarani, *Sahih al-taḥrīb* 222.

⁽¹⁸³⁾ Bukhari and Muslim (1678).

The first to be called to account will be the reciter of the Qur'an. Allah will ask him, "Did I not I teach you what I sent down to My Messenger?" He will say, "Yes, My Lord." And Allah will ask him, "What did you do with this?" He will say, "I used to stand reciting by night and by day, hoping for Your reward." Allah will say, "You lied." And the Angels will say, "You lied."⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ And then Allah will say, "But you wanted for people to say, 'What a good reciter' and it was so. Now take him to Hell."

Then the rich man will be brought and Allah will ask him "Was I not generous to you to the point that you were not in need of anyone?" He will say, "Yes, My Lord." Allah will ask him, "What did you do with what I gave you?" He will say, "My Lord, You provided me with wealth to the point that I was completely secure, and I spent it on the poor, hoping for your reward and for Paradise." Allah will say, "You lied." And the Angels will say, "You lied." Allah will say, "Rather you wanted them to say 'What a generous person he is' and it was said so. Take him to Hell."

Then the man who was supposed to be killed in the path of Allah will be brought. Allah will ask him, "Why were you killed?" He will say, "My Lord. I went out to battle for Your sake and I fought the enemy until I was killed, hoping for Your reward and for Paradise." Allah will say, "You lied." And the Angels will say, "You lied." Then Allah will say, "Rather you fought so that people would say 'What a brave person he is' and it was said so. Take him to Hell."

Then the Messenger of Allah said, "O Abu Hurraira, these are the first three of Allah's creations who will be cast into Hell on the Day of Resurrection."⁽¹⁸⁵⁾

Then people will come to whom Allah will not speak and will not look upon and will not purify and they will have a painful doom. These will be:

⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ Note here that the angels recorded his deeds of teaching as they saw without knowing his bad intention which was only known by Allah, that is why (Allah knows best) they are confirming Allah's judgment because the good deed is bad if it was accompanied with a bad intention.

⁽¹⁸⁵⁾ Tirmidhi; al-Hakim, 3/111.

1. Adulterous elders.
2. Liar kings, who used to cheat their people.
3. A poor man who was proud.
4. Those who swore by their goods and took by their oath more than the value of their goods.
5. Those who is harsh and disobedient to their parents.
6. The sexually profligate, both males and females.
7. Those who unjustly devour the wealth of others.
8. Those who corrupt their own kin.
9. Men who make themselves resemble women and women who make themselves resemble men.

And those who used to drink alcohol will be brought, and their first punishment will be that Allah will pour out for them *tin al-khubal*. That is a liquid discharged from the vaginas of prostitutes as they burn in Hell. An evil, stinking thing the equal of that which they used to drink in the world.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah promised to the one who drank alcohol in the world, that he will be given *tinatul-khabal*.” They said, “O Messenger of Allah, what is *tinal-khabal*?” He said: “*tin al-khabal* is the discharge from the vaginas of prostitutes.”⁽¹⁸⁶⁾

The Scales

On the Day of Judgment, the deeds of men will be weighed in the scales of Allah. These scales are more just than those which people measure, and are perfect in precision. No one on that Day will be dealt with unjustly. This is one of the stages of the Reckoning. Allah said, “And We place scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be wronged unjustly at all. Even if it is the weight of one seed of mustard, We bring it. And We are enough as a accountant.” (21:47)

(186) Muslim 2002.

And He also said,

“The scale that day is [a matter of] truth. So he whom weight is heavy, those will be the successful. But he whom weight is light, those are the ones who have lost their souls for they used to reject Our signs.”

(7:8)

The Messenger ﷺ said, “The scales will be set on the Day of Resurrection. If the heavens and the earth were placed in them, [the scales] would still seem large. Then the angels will say, “O Lord, for whom are these scales set?” Allah will say, “For whomever I will of My creation.” They will say, “Glory to You Allah, we have not worshipped You as You should be worshipped!”

As for *sirat* (path); it will be set [over Hell] just like a razor’s edge and the angels will say, “For whom is this prepared?” He will say, “For whomever I please of My creation.” They will say, “Glory to Allah, we have not worshipped You as You should be worshipped!”⁽¹⁸⁷⁾

Despite the greatness of these scales and their vastness, by the mercy of Allah it will be easy for the believers to fill them with good deeds on the Day of Resurrection, even with the meagerness of their remembrance of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said, “*Al-Hamdu llillah* (all praise to Allah), fills the scales and *SubanAllah* (Allah is exalted), fills the heavens and the earth.”⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ And he also said, “Two words that spring lightly from the tongue weigh heavily in the scales and are dear to the Merciful One. *Suban Allah wa bi Hamdih*, (Allah is exalted - above any imperfection - and praised) *Suban Allah al-Adhim* (Allah is exalted and He is the Great).”⁽¹⁸⁹⁾

We should be aware that whatever the number of our good deeds and whatever the extent of our worship, it could never be enough to earn what Allah has bestowed upon us by His favor. If we were to set the good deeds of man against the favor of the sight

⁽¹⁸⁷⁾ Al-Hakim, 4/586.

⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ Muslim, 223.

⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ Muslim, 2694.

that Allah has bestowed upon us, our deeds would never be enough to merit this gift of Allah.

But the magnification of our good deeds and the effacement of our bad deeds is a great favor and blessing from Allah. The blessings of Allah are infinite. So we ask Allah to deal with us on the Day of Resurrection with His pardon and with His favor, not with His justice. For if He deals with us by His justice, we will never be able to merit His blessings.

One day Aisha was thinking about Hell and began to cry.

The Prophet ﷺ asked her, "Why are you crying?" She said, "I was thinking about Hell. So will you remember your wives on the Day of Resurrection?" He said, "At three stations no one will remember anyone else. Before the scales and until one knows whether his scales will become light or heavy, and before the Book and until one knows in which hand he will receive it, and at the *sirat* (path) when it is laid upon the spine of Hell and until he is safely over it."⁽¹⁹⁰⁾

Nations in their multitudes will stand on the tips of their toes to see the fruits of their deeds and the verdict of Allah, the Glorious and Mighty. Allah said,

"And you will see each nation kneeling [from fear]. Each nation will be called to its book [and told] Today you are recompensed for what you used to do. This Book Our book speaks about you by truth, We were recording what you were doing.

As for those who believed and did good deeds, their Lord will admit them into His mercy. That is the clear success. But for those who disbelieved, "Were not My verses recited to you? Yet you arrogantly rejected and were a criminal people." (45:28)

⁽¹⁹⁰⁾ Abu Da'ud, 4755.

And many nations will be called to come forth with their idols and whatever they used to worship, and a thing will appear before them in the shape of that which they used to worship in the world.

It will be said: “Let every nation follow what it used to worship.” No one who used to worship anything other than Allah, whether idols or men or pictures but will be thrown into Hell.

It will be said to the Jews who used to worship Izra, “You lied. Allah did not take any consort and no son.”⁽¹⁹¹⁾

And the Christians who used to worship Jesus will be told, “You lied. Allah took no consort and no son.” And it will be commanded that they all be cast into Hell.

⁽¹⁹¹⁾ Bukhari. Hadith No. 4581.

The Exposure of the hypocrites

After the disbelievers have been cast face down into Hell the accounting will begin for others.

The first group will be those who believed outwardly and inwardly from among the followers of the prophets. Among them will be those who sinned and rebelled, who did good deeds and evil deeds, who committed sins both great and small. These will be given a light, which will vary among them in accordance to their deeds both good and bad. They will be told, “Go forth according to your light,” that is to say, ‘go forth over the *sirat* and your success in crossing it will be according to your deeds’.

The second group will be those who believed outwardly but disbelieved inwardly. These are the hypocrites who used to infiltrate the ranks of the believers, spreading lies and laying traps and waiting in ambush for the believers, declaring their faith and remaining loyal to the disbelievers. And although they will be standing among the believers, preparing to cross the *Sirat* (path) with them, and although Allah will give them all a light to guide them, the light of the hypocrites will suddenly go out and they will be exposed and humiliated. They will ask the believers to give them some of their light, but they will be separated. Allah said,

“On that day you will see the believing men and believing women, their light preceding before them and on their right hands, [they are told] “here’s your Good news today: ‘Gardens through which rivers flow, wherein you will live forever.’” That is the great success.

At that day, the hypocrite men and hypocrite women will say to the believers, “Wait for us, so that we acquire some of your light”. It will be said “Get behind you, and seek light”. Then a wall is placed between them with a door of which, its interior contains mercy, and its outer side contains torment. They call to them, “Were we not with you?” They will say, “Yes. But you afflicted yourselves, and awaited

[against believers], *and you doubted* [Allah's promises] *and vain wishful desires deceived you until the command of Allah came, and the great Deceiver (Satan) deceived you about Allah."*
So this day, no ransom will be taken from you nor from those who disbelieved. Your home is Hellfire. That is the place you deserve, what a wretched destination". (57:12-15)

Thus, the recompense is made similar to the type of sin.

As the hypocrites used to pretend to believe in the world, concealing their disbelief and making it into a kind of shield, as they were trying to fool Allah and the believers but without ever realizing it, they only fooled themselves. So on that Day their light will go out, their hypocrisy will be exposed, and every believer will see their hypocrisy and they will rightly join the ranks of the disbelievers.

As for the reason for the delay in joining them to the disbelievers, this is because of their attempt to fool Allah and the believers by pretending to believe. They will be led to think that they will be able to conceal themselves in the cloak of belief, by hiding among the believers [on the Day of Resurrection] as they had done in the world. When their light goes out in the midst of the people, their hypocrisy will be exposed and they will discover a deception in the place of their own attempt to deceive.

This will increase their sense of loss and regret, for just as they begin to think that their hypocrisy will get them by on the Day of Resurrection and save them from punishment, and as they approach Paradise, all will be swept away from them just as they are at Heaven's Gate. Their deception will have come back upon their own heads. Just as the pleasure of success was beginning to enter their hearts, and just as they could begin to smell the sweetness of victory, all will have been lost in an instant. Their happiness will become misery and their security will have given way to fear and boundless regret. Their light will be extinguished and they will stand exposed.

Allah said,

“The hypocrites [seek to] deceive Allah, while He is deceiving them. And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily, showing off to the people and they remember not Allah but little... The Hypocrites will surely be in the lowest depth of the Fire, and you will never find for them any one to help.” (4:142)

Then the following verse shows the consequences and that they should taste the greatest of punishments on the Day of Resurrection:

“The Hypocrites will surely be in the lowest depth of the Fire, and you will never find for them any one to help.” (4:142)

For evil plotting surrounds only its authors. Thus Allah separates the two groups. Each will proceed along its road, their directions differing one from the other. And the hypocrites will be joining the disbelievers, and the believers will be reunited with their own kind in Paradise.

The Path (*Al-Sirat*)

After the reckoning and the scale, people will proceed from the place of assembly to the *sirat*. This is a bridge set over Hell and leading to Paradise. Claws and hooks will be suspended upon it, and will be ordered to take whomever it was ordered to take.

They cause some to be scratched and grazed, some will find the fire lapping up at their flanks, and others are pressed and crowded together to find themselves at the end in the fire.

People will walk on the *sirat* to reach to Paradise. Some will walk along the *Sirat* and be cast down into Hell. Each will walk along it according to his deeds in the world and according to the straightness of his religion.

One whose path of religion was straight will enjoy an easy crossing over the *sirat*, and whoever used to veer to the left and to the right in his religion will be crossing the *sirat* with great difficulty.

Types of those who cross

Whoever crosses the *sirat* will have his deeds with him.

Some will cross in the twinkling of an eye.

And some will cross like lightening,

And some will cross like the wind.

And some will cross as one in swift pursuit and some will cross walking.

And Some will find their deeds insufficient to see them across and will be unable to proceed except by crawling.

The feet of some will slip and they will tumble into Hell. Abu Hurairah said, "By He in Whose hand is Abu Hurairah's soul, the pit of Hell is seventy years' deep."⁽¹⁹²⁾

Allah has said,

⁽¹⁹²⁾ Muslim 195.

***“And There is not one of you but will pass over it.
This is with Your Lord a decree that must be
accomplished. Then We shall save those who used
feared Allah and leave the wrongdoers kneeling
therein [Hell].” (19:71)***

All of this will happen, while our Prophet ﷺ will be standing upon the *sirat* calling out, “My Lord, may they cross safely, may they cross safely!”¹⁹³

Those who fall from the bridge over Hell

As for those who fall from the *sirat* into Hell, those guilty of major sins and blameworthy deeds from among the believers who know the Oneness of Allah, they will last in Hell for a time, according to the will of Allah. They will then be brought out as a result of intercession on their behalf. Anas said, “I asked the Messenger of Allah to intercede for me.” He said, “I will do that, if Allah wills.” I asked, “Where shall I be seeking you?” He said, “The first place to seek me is upon the *sirat*.” “And if I did not find you?” He said, “Then seek to find me before the Scales.” I said, “What if I did not find you?” He said, “Then at the Pool, I will not mistake these three places.”⁽¹⁹⁴⁾

The power of the declaration of the Oneness of Allah

Until, when Allah has completed judging His servants, and He decides to take whomever He will out of Hell, He will command the Angels to remove whoever did not associate Him with any other thing. Those who used to declare, ‘There is no god but Allah’ will be saved by the Mercy of Allah.

The power of prostration before Allah

The Angels will know the believers in Hell by their marks and the traces of their prostration, for the fires of Hell will be consuming everything of the son of Adam except the traces of

¹⁹³ (Tirmidhi 2434)

(¹⁹⁴) Tirmidhi, 2435.

prostration. Allah has forbidden the Fire to touch the places of
prostration and its signs.

This is proof of the honor and greatness of prostration before
Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah has forbidden the Fire to touch
the signs of prostration.”⁽¹⁹⁵⁾ We should consider how our prayer
and our prostration benefit us, even in this situation.

⁽¹⁹⁵⁾ Bukhari, 806.

INTERCESSION

Intercession is one of the issues, which the polytheists did not correctly understand. They dressed up the truth with falsehood until it led them to the worship of others beside Allah, whom they claimed would intercede before Allah on their behalf and help them to draw closer to Him. Slowly, Satan led them to seek the intercession of others beside Allah, and to commit *shirk*. Allah said,

“And they worship other than Allah what neither hurts them nor helps them, and they say, “These are our intercessors with Allah.” (10:18)

Intercession is a blessing from Allah, a sign of His special favor for His worshippers before all of creation. On the Day of Resurrection the right to intercede will be given to whomever He pleases. No one may intercede except by His permission, and no one may benefit from anyone’s intercession without Allah’s permission. Allah has said,

“On that day, no intercession will benefit except [that of] one whom the Merciful has given permission and has accepted his words.” (20:109)

This is again clear in the following *verses*,

“And how many angels in the heavens whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allah has permitted [it] to whom He will approve!” (53:26)

Conditions of Intercession

There are two fundamental conditions for intercession:

- **First**, That Allah permits someone who would intercede to do so. Allah said,
“Who is he that intercedes with Him but by His permission?” (2:255)
- **Second**, That Allah must be satisfied with the person on whose behalf intercession is made,

“And they cannot intercede except on behalf of one whom He approves, and they from fear of Him, are apprehensive.” (21:28)

Both of these conditions are mentioned in the following verse:

“And how many angels in the heavens whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allah has permitted [it] to whom He will approve!” (53:26)

If we look at the verses which mention the state of the polytheists and explain the reasons for their *shirk*, [polytheism] we would find that these are concerned with three issues:

1. Their call upon others than Allah for intercessors apart from Allah,
“Those Whom you invoke other than Him have no power to help you, nor can they help themselves.”
(7:197)

2. Their taking of intercessors as a means of drawing near to Allah, Who said,
“Or have they taken intercessors apart from Allah? Say, “Even though they own nothing and have no sense?”
Say, “To Allah belongs [the right to allow] intercession entirely. To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. Then to Him you will be returned.” (39:43)

“And those who have taken protectors apart from Him [say], “We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allah.” (39:3)

3. And their making permissible what Allah has forbidden and their forbidding of what Allah has permitted:

“And do not say - the lie that your tongues falsely describe - "This is lawful, and this is forbidden," to invent a lie against Allah. Those who invent lie against Allah will not succeed. A Brief enjoyment, then they will have a painful punishment.” (16:116).

“The partner worshippers will say, "If Allah had willed, we wouldn't have associated partners (with Him) nor would have our fathers, nor would we have forbidden anything." So did those who were before them deny until they tasted Our punishment”.

Then Allah replied to that by asking them for evidence of their false claims saying,

“Say, "do you have any knowledge that you can produce for us? You follow nothing but an assumption, and you telling nothing but liars.

Say, with Allah is the final-reaching [conclusive] argument. If He had willed, He would have guided you all.” (6:148)

Intercession then is of two types: that which is accepted and that which is rejected.

1. Permissible intercession accepted: Is the intercession which the believer demands from Allah alone, with the knowledge of what intercession requires, as Allah has taught us. This holds for the intercession of Allah as it does for the intercession of the prophets, martyrs and scholars.

2. Forbidden intercession is that which is demanded of someone other than Allah, to demand from them something, which only Allah grants or permits. Such is the intercession of the polytheists, who used to believe that their gods would intercede on their behalf and who claimed that they worshipped them only in order that these gods help them to get nearer to Allah.

Types of intercession

There are several types of intercession, which Allah will grant to His Messenger ﷺ.

1. The General Intercession at the place of Gathering (*Yaum al-hashr*), when all mankind will be assembled in a single place.
2. Intercession on behalf of a nation who are about to be cast into Hell, asking that they be delivered from this fate.
3. Intercession on behalf of those who have been cast into Hell, asking that they be taken out.
4. Intercession on behalf of those who have remained in Hell, asking that their punishment will be made lighter.
5. Intercession on behalf of those whose good and evil deeds are of equal weight, asking that they be taken into Paradise.

INTERCESSION OF DISBELIEVERS

When we look at the verses which mention the polytheists and explain the reasons for their *shirk* we find that these verses deal with three points:

1. Disbelievers call upon others than Allah for intercession on their behalf.
“Those you call besides Allah are servants like you. So call them, and let them answer you, if you are true!” (7:194)
2. Disbelievers who attempt to draw near to Allah through intercessors,
“To Allah belongs all intercession” (39:44)
3. Disbelievers who permit what Allah has forbidden and forbid what Allah has permitted (16:116, and 6:148). In this second verse Allah challenges them about this and asks them for evidence of their claims.

INTERCESSION OF THE MUSLIMS

Those who have been taken out of the Fires of Hell will in turn ask Allah to deliver their brothers who remain saying, “Our Lord, our brothers who used to fast with us and to pray and perform the pilgrimage with us.” They will be told, “Go and take out of Hell whom you used to know.”

They will know them by their images. Hell will be forbidden to burn their images. They will be delivering from Hell multitudes of people, of whom, some will have had Hellfire at their knees and some will have had it to the middle of their calves, and some will have had it at their heels.

They will say, “Our Lord, we have taken already out of the Fire whom you have ordered us”. Then Allah will say, “Get back and Take out of the fire whom you find in his heart a penny’s weight of goodness.” They will be taking multitudes out of Fire. Then Allah will say, “Take out of Fire whoever has an atom’s weight as of goodness.” Then they will say, “Our Lord, we have left none of those whom we used to know.”

Then Allah will say, “Go back and whomever you find with half a penny’s weight of goodness in their hearts, remove them.” And they will take out multitudes. Then they will say, “Our Lord, we find no more left whom You have commanded us to remove.”

Then Allah will say, “Go back and whomever you find with an atom’s weight of goodness in his heart, remove him from the fire.”

And they will take out multitudes. Finally they will say, “Our Lord, we find none who have any goodness in their hearts left at all.”⁽¹⁹⁶⁾ Then, whoever is taken out of the Fire will be sent by Allah to Paradise.

The Intercession of Allah

Many people will be taken out of the fires of Hell following the intercession of others. The prophets will intercede, and the scholars will intercede, and the martyrs will intercede and great multitudes will be delivered from Hell by their intercession. And in the end, their intercession will finish.

Then the greatest of intercessors will proceed. That is Allah, the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful. And by His intercession people many times over the number of those who were delivered by the intercession of others will be delivered from Hell. Allah will say, “The intercession of the intercessors is over, and thus

(¹⁹⁶) Muslim, 182.

remains the intercession of the All-Merciful. The Angels have interceded and the prophets and the believers have interceded and none is left but the All-Merciful.”

And He will take a fist or two in full from the fire and out of it nations will emerge who never did anything good for Allah at all. They would have been burnt to a crisp. He will bring them and cast them into a river called the river of life. The waters will flow over them and they will grow and emerge like a young sprout emerges from a dormant seed following a heavy rain.⁽¹⁹⁷⁾

The Angels will be commanded to “Deliver from the fire all that mentioned Me once or feared Me at some time.” They will bring out all that had in their hearts at least an atom’s weight of faith, until no one monotheist (*muwa-hid*) will ever remain in Hell. Their monotheism (*tawhid*) will have saved them from everlasting torment in the Fires of Hell.

They will be drawn out of their bodies like pearls and upon their necks they will bear a seal: “Those manumitted by Allah.” They will be told “Enter Paradise, whatever you desire, whatever you see is yours, and I have better than that.” They will say, “Our Lord, what could be better than that?” He will say, “My pleasure with you, for I will never be displeased with you.”⁽¹⁹⁸⁾

This is the real guarantee that the majority of people missed, and this alone will earn them Paradise. Guarantee that you worshiped Him alone, and He guarantees to you salvation.

The greatest kind of intercession is that of our Lord, by Whose intercession manyfold more souls will be saved from Hell than by the intercession of the prophets and all others combined. When all that who would intercede have done so, Allah will say, “Those who would intercede have done so and the intercession of the All Merciful shall begin. This intercession will never be directed towards the polytheists who put their hopes in tombs rather than in their Lord.

⁽¹⁹⁷⁾ Muslim, 183.

⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ Ahmad, 2/94.

The Intercession of the Qur'an and Prayer

It is established that fasting, the Qur'an and prayer will intercede on behalf of those who observed them. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The Qur'an is an intercession."⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ And just as it is not correct that you should say 'O my charity, intercede for me before Allah. O my fasting, intercede for me before Allah. O my recitation, intercede for me before Allah,' likewise you must not say, 'O Prophet, O righteous man, O saints, intercede for me before Allah.'

the intercession of prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Of all created beings, the greatest intercessor is our Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ. His intercession is of two types.

1. **The Great Intercession.** This will be on behalf of all mankind, both believers and disbelievers, and it will happen at the time of the Gathering. The Prophet will be asking Allah to hasten this stage of gathering into the stage of the Accounting, while all are filled with distress and the sun beats down upon the heads of mankind and its heat begins to sear into them. The other prophets will all come forward one by one and each will say, "I am not the person to do it". Then Muhammad will come and say, "I can do it." And he will intercede on behalf of all humanity, that they be moved from this place to the final Accounting. This is the general intercession, which will benefit both believers and disbelievers. On that day, all those who heard of or saw the Prophet ﷺ, and did not believe will regret it.
2. **The Special Intercession.** This is for the believers who were true to their belief in the Oneness of Allah from among the nation of Muhammad. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Every prophet has a request granted, and every prophet hastened his request, but I have

⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ Ibn Hibban, 4443.

delayed mine to be the intercession for my nation on the Day of Resurrection.” He added, “Intercession is for the great sinners of my nation.”⁽²⁰⁰⁾ .

3. The intercession for people who deserve to enter Hell, not to enter it.
4. The intercession for those who entered it, to go out of it.
5. The intercession for those who entered it, to lighten their suffering in it.
6. The intercession for those whose good deeds and evil deeds became equal, to let them enter Paradise.

HOW TO GAIN the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ has taught us how to ensure that we benefit from his intercession on the Day of Resurrection. He said, “If you hear the *mu-adhin* give the same call of the prayer, then repeat his words. Then ask for blessings for me, for whoever asks for blessings upon me, Allah will bless him ten times, then He will give me a place in Paradise which is not fitting other than for a servant of Allah, and I hope to be that person. would that it were mine. Who asks for this of me will receive my intercession.”⁽²⁰¹⁾

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Who says, ‘O Lord give Muhammad the high and honored position that You promised him’ will attain my intercession.”⁽²⁰²⁾

Therefore We should follow exactly what the Prophet ﷺ has taught us in order that we benefit from his intercession, and not call on others beside Allah for intercession, as do some stubborn and heedless people who have no regard for the *sunnah* and no understanding of it.

⁽²⁰⁰⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽²⁰¹⁾ Muslim, 384.

⁽²⁰²⁾ Bukhari, 614.

To ask for the blessings of Allah upon our Prophet ﷺ is another reason for our receiving his intercession. Abu al-Darda said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever asks for the blessings of Allah upon me in the morning ten times and in the evening ten times will receive my intercession on the Day of Resurrection.”⁽²⁰³⁾

Some Important Issues Regarding Intercession

Intercession is not permitted for those who oppose the belief in the Oneness of Allah, who fall into *shirk*, and innovating in religion.

The Prophet ﷺ was asked, “Who is the most deserving one of your intercession?” He said, “Whoever says that there is no god but Allah, sincerely from his heart.”⁽²⁰⁴⁾ And he said, “Every prophet will have a request granted and every prophet hastens to make his request. I have made mine to be intercession for my nation on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be received by whoever of my nation dies without associating anything with Allah, if Allah wills.”⁽²⁰⁵⁾

This means that applying *tawhid* (monotheism) and the soundness of one’s belief that there is no god but Allah is the greatest reason to gain intercession.

As for those who call upon other than Allah, those who seek assistance from the dead instead of the Ever-Living One Who does not die, those who touch the wall of the dead and wipe with their hands upon the walls and the earth of tombs and take them as places of prayer, how far they are from receiving intercession.

Intercession is for those who believe in the Oneness of Allah, not for the polytheists, those who innovate and those who twist their religion. Intercession is for Allah alone. Allah permits whomever He pleases to intercede and it is not a thing that intercessors decide for themselves to do.

⁽²⁰³⁾ Al-Tabarani (al-Albani, *Sahih al-targhib*) p. 346.

⁽²⁰⁴⁾ Bukhari, 99.

⁽²⁰⁵⁾ Bukhari, 6304.

Those who take today false intercessors for themselves will be saying tomorrow as Allah informs us,
“So we have [now] neither intercessors, nor close friend, then, if only we had another chance [to return], so will be of those believers. ” (26:100-102)

Then Allah says,
***“So there will not benefit them the intercession of
intercessors.”*** (74:48)

Since Allah alone has the right of intercession, it is not permissible to ask anyone other than Him for intercession. It was the habit of the polytheists to make such requests. They thought that since the prophets and the righteous could intercede on their behalf, they could therefore ask them to do so for them. Allah made it clear that requests for intercession may only be made to Him and he said,

“Say, ‘To Allah belongs all intercession.’” (39:44)

An intercessor should not seek to intervene on behalf of any person other than by the permission of Allah and His pleasure. Why then should we not ask for intercession from the One Who owns the power to do so and Whose pleasure it is to do so, and refrain from asking this to anyone else?

There is no greater intercession than the intercession of our Creator after the intercession of created beings has ended. Allah will then say, “The intercession of the intercessors is over, and here comes the intercession of the Most Merciful of those who have mercy”.

As for the intercession of created beings, this will be that of the prophets and the Angels, of the scholars and the martyrs, as the *hadith* says, “The martyr may intercede on behalf of seventy from his household.”⁽²⁰⁶⁾.

⁽²⁰⁶⁾ Abu Daud, (2505) and Ibn Hibban (1612).

Heaven and Hell

Then Paradise awaits the believers, their eternal abode, their motherland. Whoever enters it shall never come out of it. It is the abode of blessings, the abode of reward. It is beyond all description. Allah stirs our longing for it saying, "I have prepared for my righteous servants something which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no human heart could envisage."⁽²⁰⁷⁾

Allah said,

"The example [description] of Paradise, which the Godfearing are promised: Rivers flow underneath it. Its food is endless, and its shade [as well]. That is the consequence of those who fear [Allah], while the consequence of disbelievers is Hellfire." (13:35)

And He said,

"The example [description] of Paradise, which the Godfearing have been promised: In it, are rivers of water unaltered, and rivers of milk the taste of which does not change, and rivers of wine delicious to those drinkers, and rivers of purified honey. And for them will be all fruits and [further] forgiveness from their Lord. Are they like those who live forever in the Fire and are given boiling water that cuts their guts?"
(47:15)

Finally when the people of Paradise enter Paradise they will praise their Lord for this delightful consequence, as

Allah mentioned in His Qur'an,

"And they will say, "Praise to Allah Who has removed sadness [sorrow] from us, for Our Lord is indeed Forgiving, Appreciative, He [Allah] who has settled in the home of Eternity, wherein no tiredness touches us nor weariness." (35:34)

⁽²⁰⁷⁾ Muslim, 2824.

And every day Allah makes Paradise more beautiful. He is always increasing its blessings and its beauty in preparation for its people, who are on the road to it even now, so that they will feel safe and secure after they have endured the difficulties of the world and every kind of trial, of falsehood and tyranny and disbelief and corruption and temptation.

A tiny drop of Paradise will be enough to make them forget all the hardship and tribulation they have known in the world.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “On the Day of Resurrection, the one who was most fortunate in life among the people of Hell will be brought forward, and be given a small dip in Hell, then he will be asked, ‘Oh son of Adam, did you see any good in the world, did you happen by any comfort at all?’ He will say, ‘No, I swear by Allah, none.’”

And the most miserable of the people in the world among the people of Paradise will be brought and given one dip in Paradise. then he will be asked, ‘Oh son of Adam, did you see any misery in the world, did you happen by any hardship at all?’ And he will say, ‘No, by Allah, I came across no misery at all there and saw no hardship.’”⁽²⁰⁸⁾.

It is not that he has told a lie, but the world and all it contains can never equal even a single drop of Paradise or Hell.

Once the people of Paradise have crossed the *sirat* safely and re-assuredly, and before they arrive to Paradise, they will come to a place under an arch which is between Heaven and Hell. Here, some of them will be taken to account by others, and if they set things right and reach reconciliation between one another and are purified from any wrong thing, they will be permitted to enter Paradise.

⁽²⁰⁸⁾ Muslim, 2807.

The Prophet ﷺ reported that Allah would show the owner of the right his great palace, which will dazzle him in its splendor and magnificence, until he says:

“My Lord, who is this for?” Allah will say, “For whomever pays its price.” He will say, “What gold, what silver could equal this?” He will say, “It is yours if you forgive your brother, and he will rush to forgive him saying, “O Allah, I bear witness that I have forgiven him””.

No one will enter Paradise with any remainder of hatred or rancor in his heart against his brother in faith, as Allah said,

“And we have removed from their breasts of resentment. Rivers flow beneath them, and they said, “Praise to Allah, Who has guided us to this. We would not have been guided if it had not been for Allah having guided us. The messengers of our Lord came indeed with the truth.” And they are called “This is Paradise. You have been made to inherit it by what you used to do.” (7:43)

And also,

“And We removed what’s in their breasts [of resentment]. [so they became] brothers facing one another, (they rest) on couches.” (15:47)

As they arrive at the gates of Paradise, the Angels will have opened its doors and announced their arrival. Allah said,

“And those who have feared their Lord will be driven to Paradise in groups until, when they reach it, its gates have been opened, and its keepers say, “Peace be upon you! You have been purified, so enter it forever,”

They will say, "Praise be to Allah, Who has fulfilled to us His promise, and made us inherit the earth, living in Paradise where we wish!" How wonderful is the reward of those doers [of righteousness].

***And you see the angels surrounding the Throne,
exalting the praises of their Lord. And it was judged
between them by the truth. And it will be said,
"Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of All the worlds!"
(39:73)***

And when they enter it they will know their places in it. Allah
says,

***"And those who got killed for the cause of Allah,
He will never waste their deeds. He will [instead]
guide them and dispose their minds aright, And
admit them to Paradise, which He made it known to
them." (47:4)***

The Prophet ﷺ said, "When the believers pass softly over
(the bridge across) Hell, they will be stopped at a bridge
(arch) between Hell and Paradise where they will retaliate
upon each other for the rights that are due among them in the
world, and when they get purified of all the wrong done or
rights among them, they will be admitted into Paradise, by
Allah. By Him in whose hands the soul of Muhammad is
every one of them knows his dwelling place in Paradise better
than knowing his dwelling place in this world"⁽²⁰⁹⁾.

This should not seem strange at all, for the one who can guide a
newborn child, and even an animal, to its mother's breast just as
soon as it is out of the womb could guide the people of Paradise to
their homes there. Surely, Allah is capable of all things.

⁽²⁰⁹⁾ Bukhari, 2440.

The First to Enter Paradise

The people of Paradise will be lead in droves and before them there will be seventy thousand who will enter Paradise without account or punishment. Their faces will glow with a light like that of the full moon, and they will be proceeded by the Prophet Muhammad, who will be the first to enter Paradise.

He said, "I will come to the gates of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection and the gates will be opened and the keeper will say, 'Who are you?' I will say, 'Muhammad.' He will say, 'I have been commanded on your account, not to admit anyone before you.'"⁽²¹⁰⁾

Nations will crowd the gates of Paradise, and the noblest of them will be the nation of our Prophet ﷺ. He said, "You are among seventy nations; you are the last of them and the most honored by Allah, the Glorious and Mighty."⁽²¹¹⁾

The nation of Muhammad will account for half of the People of Paradise. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Would you like to be a quarter of the people of Paradise?" They will say, "Yes".

He said, "Would you like to be a third of the people of Paradise? They said, "Yes" He said, "Would you like to be half of the people of Paradise." They will say, "Yes." He said, 'By He in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, I hope that you will be half of the people of Paradise.'²¹²

And the poor believers will proceed the rich believers to Paradise, just as the Prophet ﷺ said, "The poor Muslims will precede the rich in Paradise by five hundred years."⁽²¹³⁾

The people will be called to enter Paradise:

⁽²¹⁰⁾ Muslim, 197.

⁽²¹¹⁾ Ahmad, 4/47; al-Hakim 4/84.

²¹² (Bukhari 4741 & Muslim 222)

⁽²¹³⁾ Tirmidhi, 3354.

The people of Prayer will be called through the Gate of Prayer.
And the people of Jihad will be called through the Gate of
Jihad.
And the people of Charity will be called through the Gate of
Charity.
And the people of Fasting will be called through the gate called
Rayyan, which means to quench a thirst.

Some people will come having devoted themselves to good works such that every Gate will call out to them, honoring them for their perseverance in doing good works and worshipping Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ told Abu Bakr that he would be among those to whom all the Gates of Paradise will call out. Abu Bakr had asked him, “Will there be anyone who will be called out to by all of these Gates?” The Prophet ﷺ told him, “Yes. And I hope that you will be among them.”⁽²¹⁴⁾

Then waves of people will descend upon Paradise, one after the other, in an order determined by their good works in the world.

Those who have mastered the Qur’an, recited it often and committed it to memory will be told, “Recite and rise up as you used to read in the world, for your status in Paradise will be at the last verse you recite.”⁽²¹⁵⁾

Then the father of the righteous man will enter Paradise by the supplication of his son, who used to supplicate for him, as the Prophet ﷺ said, “A man will attain a high station in Paradise, then he will be asking, ‘How did I reach this high station? And he will be told, ‘By the sought forgiveness of your son to you’.”⁽²¹⁶⁾

And he said, “A man will have a place in Paradise that is greater than that merited by his works, for Allah will have tried him again and again with things that he disliked until he attained this station.”⁽²¹⁷⁾

⁽²¹⁴⁾ Bukhari, 1897.

⁽²¹⁵⁾ Ahmad in his book *Al-Musnad* V. 2 P. 509 (authentic).

⁽²¹⁶⁾ Ahmad, 2/509.

⁽²¹⁷⁾ Al-Hakim, 1/344.

The Death OF DEATH!

After the people of Paradise have all entered it, and the people of Hell have all entered it, death will be brought to a place between light and darkness, and then set between Heaven and Hell, then it will be slaughtered.

A caller will call out to the people of Paradise, “O people of Paradise, eternity without death (remain and die not)” and the caller will call out to the people of Hell, “O people of Hell, (remain and die not) eternity without death.” Then the joy of the people of Paradise will increase with no bounds, and the people of Hell will have more sorrow beside their own sorrow.⁽²¹⁸⁾

Allah’s Call to the People of Paradise

Allah will call the people of Paradise, “O People of Paradise, it is yours to be healthy and never be sick, and to live and never die, and to be young and never grow old, and to be joyful and never regret or get sad.”⁽²¹⁹⁾

And in Paradise they will not urinate or defecate, or blow their noses, and they will not perish, but they will know everlasting happiness.

The believer in Paradise will have the sexual strength of a hundred men.

They will have therein all what they desire, and Allah has more for them.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever enters Paradise will be blessed, will never know sorrow, his clothes will never become threadbare and his youth will never wane.”⁽²²⁰⁾

⁽²¹⁸⁾ Bukhari, 6548; Muslim, 2850.

⁽²¹⁹⁾ Muslim, 2837.

⁽²²⁰⁾ Muslim, 2386.

There will be degrees of reward in Paradise. The least of its people will have the like of what the earth contains and ten-fold, and will think that his is the highest station in Heaven.⁽²²¹⁾

And a caller will call out to them saying, “O people of Paradise, you have an appointment (a promise) which Allah wants to fulfill you.”

They will say, “What is this? Did He not make our scales heavy and brighten our faces, and take us into Paradise, and save us from Hell?”

Then Allah will remove the veil from them, and they will see their Lord. They will not have been given anything better than to gaze upon His face.⁽²²²⁾

He will tell them, “O people of Paradise.” And they will say, “We attend to Your call, our Lord, to Your Pleasure and the Goodness in Your Hands.”

He will say, “Are you pleased?” They will say, “How could we not be pleased O Lord, while You have given us what You have given none other of Your creation.” He will say, “Shall I give you something better than this?” They will say, “What could be better?” And He will say, “I will be pleased with you and will never be angry with you.”⁽²²³⁾

Allah said,

“The companions of Paradise are – this day – are amused in joyful occupation, they and their wives are in shades, lying on couches.

They have therein fruits, and they have whatever they request [wish or desire] for, “peace” is the word [to them] from a Lord who is Merciful.” (36:55-58)

Then after Allah will address the people of Hell after separating them from the people of Paradise, saying to them,

“And stand apart today, O Criminals!

⁽²²¹⁾ Muslim, 182.

⁽²²²⁾ Ahmad and Tirmidhi.

⁽²²³⁾ Bukhari, 7518.

“Did I not command you, O Sons of Adam, that you never worship Satan, for he is to you an open enemy. And that you should worship Me? That is a path straight. For he had [indeed] led a great multitude people among you astray. Don’t you then think? This is Hell, which you were promised. Burn in it today for what you used to disbelief [reject truth]. This day We will seal their mouths, and their hands will speak to us, and their feet will bear witness as to what they used to earn.” (36:59-65)

The Last to enter Paradise

The last person to enter Paradise will be the last one to be taken out of Hell. He will emerge from Hell crawling and Allah will say to him, “Go and enter Paradise, you will find there the like of the world and even ten-fold.” He will be filled with delight and joy and will think that he is the richest of the people of Paradise and that his is the loftiest station, while in fact he is the least of them and his is the lowest station.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Moses asked his Lord, “What is the lowest station of Paradise?” Allah said, “That of the man who comes after all the people of Paradise have been admitted, and it will be said to him:

‘Enter Paradise.’ He will say,
‘O Lord, how can I, when all the people have taken their places and received their rewards?’ He will be told,
‘Would you not be pleased to receive the likes of what a king had in the world? He will say,
‘Yes, I am satisfied, I am satisfied my Lord.’ Allah will say,
‘This is yours, and again, and again, and again.’
Upon the fifth time the man said,
‘I am pleased, my Lord.’ Allah will say,
‘This is yours and even more ten-fold, and whatever you desire is yours, and whatever you see is yours.’
He will say ‘I am pleased, my Lord.’”

Then Moses asked, “And what about the highest station?” Allah said,
“Those whom I wanted, whom I have planted their honor by My Hand, and sealed. No eye has seen it, no ear has heard it, and no heart envisioned it.”⁽²²⁴⁾

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “If only a small piece of Paradise less than the size of a nail of Paradise were to appear [in the world] it would fill the four corners of the heavens and the earth with beauty, and if a man from the people of Paradise were to appear in the world, his light would make that of the sun look like the twinkling of a star.”⁽²²⁵⁾

The people of Paradise will praise Allah for having taken away their sorrow and worry and fatigue. They will not regret anything in Paradise except of one thing, and that is the time that they spent in the world without remembering Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ “The people of Paradise will have no regrets except for the time they spent in the world and did not remember the praises of Allah, the Glorious and Mighty, in it.”⁽²²⁶⁾ The only thing that will increase their blessings in it will be their praises of Allah and thanksgiving to Him for the everlasting bounties and the blessings they receive.

“And we have removed from their breasts of resentment. Rivers flow beneath them, and they said, “Praise to Allah, Who has guided us to this. We would not have been guided if it had not been for Allah having guided us. The messengers of our Lord came indeed with the truth.” And they are called “This is Paradise. You have been made to inherit it by what you used to do.” (7:43)

⁽²²⁴⁾ Muslim, 189; Tirmidhi, 3196.

⁽²²⁵⁾ Ahmad, 1/179

⁽²²⁶⁾ al-Tabarani, 5323.

**All Praise is His
from the Beginning to the End**

Allah said,
*And you see the angels surrounding the Throne,
exalting the praises of their Lord.”* (39:73)

Allah begins with praise of Himself, saying,

*“Praise is to Allah, Who created the heavens and
the earth, and made the darkness and the light.
Then [despite that] the disbelievers equate others
with their Lord.”* (6:1)

And He concludes with praise of Himself saying,

*And it was judged between them by the truth.
And it will be said, "Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord
of All the worlds!"* (39:73)

And He combined both of these statements in the verse,

*“To Him belongs the praise in the heavens and
the earth, and alike at the setting sun and in your
noontide hour.
He brings out the living from the dead, and He
brings out the dead from the living, and He revives
the earth after her death. And just like that you will
be brought out.”* (30:18)

So the praise is to Allah in the first and in the last. His is the
bounty and His is the bestowing, and all praises are His.

greetings of Peace in the house of Peace

People will enter Paradise in peace as Allah said,
***“For to them will be the home of peace [Paradise]
with their Lord. And He is their ally [guardian]
because of what they used to do.”*** (6:127)

And He said,
***“Those who fear Allah will be in gardens and
springs.
Enter it then in peace and safety [secure].”*** (15:45).

And He said,
***“Those Who fear the Gracious in secret and came
with a heart surrender in devotion to Him. [it will be
said] Enter it in peace. This day is a day of
immortality.
There they will have whatever they desire, but what
We have there is more.”***(50:33)

Their greeting among themselves will be *Salam* as will be the
Angels' greeting to them also. Allah said,
***“Those who remained patient, seeking with that their
Lord’s countenance, and established prayers, and
spent some of what We have provided them secretly
and publicly, and avoid evil with the good. Those will
achieve the best consequence of the final home,
gardens of perpetual residence they enter with
whoever is righteous among their fathers, their wives
and their descendants. And the angels will enter into
them from every gate, (Saying,) “Peace be upon you
for what patiently endured. ” How excellent is this
final home.”*** (13:22-24)

Indeed, Allah will greet them with the same greeting, as
He said,
***“Their greeting the day they meet Him is “Peace,”
and He has prepared for them a generous reward.”***
(33:44)

The love and affection between the people of Paradise will increase among one another, as Allah described it,
“Close friends on that day will be enemies to one another, except those Godfearing ones. My worshippers, no fear will there be on you today, nor you should grieve. Those who believed Our verses and were submissive [Muslims]. Enter Paradise, You and your wives, in happiness.”

And He describes the extent of happiness and blessings they enjoy, saying,
“Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them, and there will be in it what souls desire and their eyes delight. And you will live therein for ever. And this is Paradise you have made to inherit by what you used to do. For you therein plenty of fruits from which you will eat.” (43:67-73)

Hell-Fire

Hell is the eternal abode of all who denied Allah and defied His messengers. Or temporal and possible for those who believed but disobeyed. Allah said,

*“The criminals will be in the punishment of Hell forever.
It will not be lightened for them, and they will despair in it.
We did not wrong them, but they were indeed the wrong doers.
And they will cry [in Hell] “O Mâlik⁽²²⁷⁾, let your Lord make us die.” He will say, “No, but you are remaining.”
We brought the truth to you, but most of you were haters of the truth.
Or did they set up a plan [conspiracy]? We are too planing.
Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and private conversations? But Our messengers are with them [around] writing.” (43:74-80)*

And He said,
*“Allah has cursed the disbelievers, and prepared them a blaze.
Abiding therein forever. They will find no protector or helper.
The day their faces are turned about the Fire, they say, “How we wish that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed His Messenger!
And they say too, “Our Lord, we obeyed our masters and great men, so they misled us from the way. Our Lord, double on them the punishment, and curse them with a great curse.” (33:64-68)*

⁽²²⁷⁾ Mâlik is the name of the angel in charge of Hell.

And he also said,
“And say, “The truth is from your Lord.” So whoever so wills, let him believe, and whoever so wills, let him disbelieve. We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose wall will surround them, and if they ask for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten [murky oil] which scalds the faces. How wretched is such drink, and evil is a place to dwell in!” (18:29)

Their clothes and their food and their drink will all be of fire, and they will not die in Hell. Each time the fire devours their skin, Allah will replace it with a new one so that they will taste the reward of their disbelief and their disobedience. Allah said,

“But for those who disbelieved, cloth of fire is cut out for them, boiling water is cut out for them, boiling water will be poured upon their heads. By which their skins and that within their bellies will be melted, and they will have maces of iron. Every time they want to get out of it - from anguish - they are returned to it and [it is said]“Taste the punishment of the burning fire.” Allah will admit those who believed and done good deeds to gardens underneath which rivers flow, where they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their clothing will be silk. They have been guided to the best of words,²²⁸ and they have been guided to the path of the Praiseworthy.” (22:19-24).

They will not die in Hell, nor will they relax and get rest, as Allah said,
“Those who have disbelieved, for them is Fire of Hell, No end for them that they die, nor its punishment

⁽²²⁸⁾“The best of words” is “There is no god but God.” It is the first half of the statement of faith pronounced and believed by all Muslims.

will be lightened for them. Thus We reward every ungrateful one. And they cry for help in it, "Our Lord, let us out so we will do right, other than the deeds we used to do."

But Allah responds to them saying,
"Did not We give you life long enough for whoever would remember therein to remember? And the Warner came to you? So now taste, [the punishment] for there is not for the wrongdoers any one to help."
(35:36)

Didn't Allah give them time in the world to think about this, and didn't He send them messengers?

As for their food, it will come from a tree called *zaqum*, which grows, in Hell. Allah said,
*"The tree of Zaqqûm."⁽²²⁹⁾
Is the food of the sinner.
Like molten lead that boils in bellies, as the boiling of scalding water.
"Seize him and drag him into the midst of the Blazing fire, then pour over his head the punishment of boiling water."^(44:43-46)*

The Prophet ﷺ said, "If a drop of *zaqum* were to fall into the world, it would spoil the crops of all the people of the earth, so how about those for whom it is their food?"⁽²³⁰⁾
And if they drink the waters [of Hell] it will cut up their bowels as Allah has said,

"Like one who stays eternally in the Fire, and are given to drink scalding water that cuts their guts."^(47:15)

⁽²²⁹⁾For further explanation of *zaqqûm*. See Chapter 37, Verse 62, and Chapter 56, Verse 52.

⁽²³⁰⁾ Ahmad, 1/338.

Then Allah will restore their bowels another time, then they will have to drink because it is at least better than fire, even though it will cut up their bowels again.

What a great loss! How much have they lost of the good of the world? They forbade themselves the good things of this world and the next. Allah said,

***“How much gardens and springs they left behind,
and fields of grain and noble places. And luxuries in
which they took delight!
Thus, We made other people to inherit them.
So neither the heaven wept for them nor the
earth, nor were they reprieved.” (44:25-29).***
The Least Punishment

And the least of them will be a man who will be standing on two fire stones in which his brain boils thereof. He will think that his is the worst punishment, while his is the lightest.

Allah will make their bodies many times bigger in Hell than they were in the world. The Prophet ﷺ said, “A man from among the people of the Fire will be made big for the fire until one of his molars will be as big as [Mount] Uhud.”⁽²³¹⁾

They will rush to the left and the right searching for some ways of escape, some way to save themselves from the fire, and the angels will meet them and strike them down saying, “Take yourselves out of the fire!” Allah said,

“If you see when the angels take [the souls of] those who disbelieved, striking their faces and their backs and [they say to them] “Taste the punishment of the fire!

⁽²³¹⁾ Ahmad, 4/366.

This is for what your hands have sent on ahead, and that Allah is not unjust to His servants. (8:50)

And He said,
“As for those sinful ones, their shelter is Hellfire. Whenever they try to go out of it, they are returned to it, and [it is said], “Taste the punishment of the Fire you used to deny.” (32:20)

They will shed tears of blood from the depths of their regret and cry out to the Guardian Angel of Hell that Allah should relieve them of this fate, if only by death.

Allah said,
“And they said, "O Mâlik, let your Lord kill us." He said, "You are to stay." We brought the truth to you but most of you are enemies of the truth.” (43:78)

Now they wish to remain dead while they were wishing before to live always in life. But now, even the death they wish is forbidden to them. What small pleasure in the world would have been worth this everlasting torment?

Furthermore, they will ask the angels to intercede for them before Allah, that their punishment may be made lighter, if only by a single day.

***“And those in Hellfire say to the Keepers of Hell,
“Supplicate your Lord that He may lighten our punishment even for one day.
They say, “Didn’t your messengers come to you with clear proofs? “ They say, “Yes.” They say, “So supplicate, but the supplication of the disbelievers is nothing but in vain.” (40:49)***

THE ARGUMENT BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF PARADISE AND HELL

People of Paradise will speak to the people of Hell and remind them of how they used to mock them and to call them the most evil of names. How deep will be their despair and their regret on this Day when they see the hardship and the torment they have brought upon themselves and when they see how the believers have been rewarded with everlasting bounties in Paradise.

A wall will be placed between the people of Paradise and the people of Hell. A door will be in this wall. The side facing the people of Paradise will be of mercy, and the side facing the people of Hell will be of torment.

The people of Paradise will speak to the people of Hell, whom they used to know in the world, on the Day of Resurrection. Allah said,

“And the companions of Paradise will call out to the dwellers of Hellfire, “We have found what our Lord promised us true, so did you find what your Lord promised True?” They will say, “Yes” Then a crier among them will proclaim, “Let the curse of Allah be on evildoers. Those who used to block the path of Allah and seek to make it [seem] crooked, and who are themselves disbelievers in the Last Day.” (7:44)

“And the dwellers of Hellfire will cry out to the companions of Paradise, “Pour some water upon us, or some of what Allah has provided you.” They will say, “Allah has forbidden both to the disbelievers.” (7:50)

See then how much they are humiliated today after they were so proud and arrogant in the world, and now they are begging the people of Paradise to give them something from Paradise to ease the heat of the fire. This is the result of their evil deeds,

“Those who took their religion as play and amusement, and whom the worldly Life deceived them. So today We will forget them just as they forgot the meeting of this day of theirs, and they used to deny Our signs [verses].” (7:51)

They will desperately groan to Allah and beg Him in supplication to save them from their situation. He will say to them,

“Cry not [in supplication] today; you shall not be helped from Us. My verses had been recited to you, but you were turning back on your heels.” (23:65-66)

And they will turn to Allah humbly and submissively saying,

“Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us, and we were a people astray. Our Lord, bring us out of it, and if we returned [to evil] we’ll be then wrongdoers. He will say, ‘Remain despised in it, and do not speak to Me.

There was a party of My servants, who used to say, ‘Our Lord, we have believed. So forgive us and have mercy on us for You are the Most Merciful of all those who are merciful.’

But you were mocking them until that made you forget my remembrance (revelation) and you were laughing at them.

I have rewarded them this Day for the patience they showed [and their reward is] that they are the winners.” (23:106)

They used to laugh at the believers and joke about them. But matters will be different in the next world!

“The evildoing criminals [disbelievers] used to laugh at those who believed,

*And when they passed by them they used to wink one
to another [in mockery].
And when they returned to their own people, they
returned joking.
And when they saw them they said, "Certainly those
are misguided."
But this day, those who believed who will be laughing
at the disbelievers.
On high couches, viewing.
Have not the disbelievers been paid for what they
used to do?" (83:29).*

They used to accuse the believers of misguidance, extremism, and terrorism, and that they would end up in Hell. But today they are searching for them among the people of Hell but they do not find them there,

*"And they [disbelievers] will say, 'What's the matter
that we don't see men whom we used to count among
the wicked? Did we take them (wrongly) as a joke, or
have (our) eyes missed them?" (38:63)*

They'll say "Perhaps they are here in Hell with us but we cannot see them, then Allah will complete their words saying
*"That indeed is truth, the quarreling of the fellows of
Hellfire."* (38:64).

The Mutual Recriminations Of the People of the Fire

On that Day, the enmity of the people of Hell will become clear, as Allah casts wave upon wave of them upon their own brothers' heads. They will greet one another saying, "*No welcome for you,*" (38:59). As Allah has said, And they will curse one another saying, then Allah will say to them,

*"Enter among nations which had passed away
before you of jinn and mankind into the Fire.
Whenever a nation enters, it curses its sister."
(7:38)*

The Prophet Abraham had told his pagan people that their friendship on the *shirk* that they gather today will become at the

Day of Resurrection hatred against one another, and each one will be denying one another and cursing one another, as Allah quotes them saying,

“And He said [to them], ‘You've taken apart from Allah idols as [a bond of] affection among you in the Worldly life. Then on the Day of Resurrection, each one of you will deny the other and each will curse the other, and your home will be Hellfire and you won't have any helpers.’” (29:25)

We can see a glimpse of this enmity between the disbelievers today, as the Qur'an explains,

“And each of them will come to the other and asking [arguing] them.

They will say, "You used to come to us from the right." ²³²

They will answer, "No. But you (yourselves) weren't believers, and we had no authority over you, but you were yourselves a transgressing people.

So the Word [decree] of Our Lord has come into effect upon us that we shall have the taste [of punishment].

So we led you astray [since] we were ourselves misled."

So, that day, they will be sharing in the punishment.

Then Allah seals this quarrel among them by saying,
“That is how We do to the criminals.” (37:27-33)

Their enmity in Hell will increase as each accuses the other and tries to lay the blame for his predicament upon someone else.

“At that time when they argue in the Fire, then the weak ones [who followed] say to those who were arrogant, “We were your followers, so will you save us from a share of Hellfire?”

⁽²³²⁾According to commentators, "You used to come to us from the right" has three meanings: (1) You overpowered us. (2) You deceived us. (3) You swore you were right.

The arrogant ones will say, "We're all in it. Allah has already judged between the servants." (40:47-48)

"And they all appear before their Lord. Then the weak will say to those who were arrogant, "We were your followers, so would you avail us against some of the punishment of Allah?" They say, "If Allah had guided us, we would have guided you. It is all the same for us, whether we rage or bear [the torments of punishment] there is no way for us to escape." (14:21)

And also

"And if you could but see when the wrong doers are brought are made to stand before their Lord, each one among them is throwing back the word of blame on one another. against the other. Those who were deemed weak will say to those who were arrogant [who blocked on them the way of guidance], "Had it not been for you, we would have been believers."

Those who were arrogant will say to those who were deemed weak, "Did we avert you from the Guidance after it had come to you? No. You were criminals!"

Then, Those who were thought weak will say to those arrogant, "'No. But it was [your] plotting by night and day when you were ordering us to disbelieve in Allah and set up rivals to Him." And they will be concealing regret when they saw the punishment, and We put shackles on the necks of those who disbelieved. Will they be recompensed [rewarded] except for what they used to do?" (34:31)

Every group of them will ask Allah to increase the punishment for the other and say,

"Our Lord, these led us astray, so give them a double dose of Hellfire." He will say, "Each one has a double, but you do not know." (7:38)

They will even hope that the others would be cast down and trampled under their feet. Allah said,
“And those who disbelieved will say, “Our Lord, show us those who misled us of jinn and men. We’ll put them under our feet that they be among the lowest.” (41:29)

SATAN LECTURES HIS FOLLOWERS IN HELL

And then the Great Deceiver, the Enemy of Mankind, who was behind all the corruption in the world and the reason for most of the people of Hell ending up there, will stand before them and declare his innocence and deny all accusations against him.

“And Satan said, when the matter has been concluded, 'Allah had promised you with the promise of truth. And I promised but betrayed you. And I had no authority [power] over you except that I invited you [to do evil] and you responded. So don't blame me, but blame yourselves. I can't rescue you, nor can you rescue me. I surely deny that which you involved me with, and for wrongdoers is a painful punishment.” (14:22)

Likewise, each group in Hell will denounce the other saying,

“And if only those who wronged would see [that] when they see the punishment, that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah [to be certain that] Allah is severe in punishment!”

[At that time] those who have been followed dissociate themselves from those who followed [them] and they see the punishment, and all the ties with them are cut off. And those who followed say, “If only we had another turn, so we' would disown ourselves from them just as they dissociated themselves from us. That is how Allah shows them their own deeds as regrets for them, and they will not get out of Hell.” (2:165)

And their loss and their regret will become clearly and startlingly apparent, as Allah said,
“And they said, “Our Lord, we obeyed our chiefs and great men, and they misled us from the way. “Our

Lord, give them a double of punishment, and curse them with a great curse.” (33:68)

And they will deeply regret what they have lost and wish that they had followed the messengers. Allah said,

“The day when the wrongdoer bites on his hands [in regret], he says, “Oh, I wish I had taken a way with the Messenger!”

“Woe to me! Oh, I wish I hadn't taken so-and-so [i.e., Satan] as a friend!”

“He led me astray from the Remembrance [way of guidance] after it had come to me.” For Satan is a deserter to man [fails him when most needed].”

(25:27-29)

That is the picture of the Last Day, made clear (once again) by Islam after it had been removed from the former Books of revelation.

The Old Testament, despite its great length and multitude of pages, today is free of any mention of the Last Day, while the new one mentioned it but made it a day of oppression, not judgment, because it invited all kinds of criminals on one condition, and that is to believe that salvation is not based on works but on faith only in one person who had suffered and died for a short period of seventy-two hours for the benefit of thousands of billions of people, then he returned to life again, and by this short and temporal death freed them all from all their sins.

How easy it would be to gain followers if Islam were to invite people to believe without practicing. But is this a true offer for salvation or it is a deceit to encourage the sinners to go on with their sins and to discourage them to do good?

This dogma announces this to people: “Do not work”.

Does this not make Satan content, because this is what he is always striving for, to stop the doing of good, and incite the doing of evil?

Once a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him when the Last Day would come. The Prophet asked him in turn, “What did you prepare for it?”²³³

BENEFITS OF BELIEF IN THE LAST DAY

Writers normally deal with the subject of the Last Day in chapters that deal with sentiments of the heart and with asceticism.

In fact, this subject is of vital importance. Remembrance of the Last Day is behind every good act, and forgetfulness of it is behind every evil deed.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “He whose greater concern is the world, Allah will separate him from his task, and will place poverty between his eyes, and nothing of the world will come to him other than what has been written for him. And he whose greater concern is the hereafter, Allah will unite him with his task, and place his wealth in his heart, and life will come to him submissively.”⁽²³⁴⁾

If a Christian was truthful in preferring the next world than this world and truthful in fearing the punishment of Allah, he would have rush to search out the true religion, and not let anything to stop him.

For no one should doubt that followers of false religions are not seriously concerned with acting according to the requirements of their religions and are worried about the Last Day.

Despite the importance of the Last Day, most people deny that it will ever come. Allah said,

“Say, *“It’s a great news, which you’re turning away from.”* (38:67)

“*But most of people are disbelievers in the meeting with their Lord.*” (30:8)

²³³ (Bukhari 6170 and Muslim 2640)

⁽²³⁴⁾ Ibn Maja, (al-Albani, Silsila al-Sahihah, 949).

These are the vast majority on the earth, Allah the Almighty said,
“If you obey most of people on earth, they would lead you far from the way of Allah. They are following nothing but uncertainty, and they are only guessing”.
(6:116)

Allah did not create the world simply so that we would know that there is a Last Day and discuss it theoretically. Rather, He intended for us to prepare ourselves for it, to act in preparedness for it and to make our faith active and fruitful.
Thus Allah said,

***“Whoever wants the hasty [joy of the world], We hasten for him what We will, for whom We want. Then We set Hell for him, which he will [enter to] burned, censured and banished. And whoever desires the Hereafter world and strives for it as should be striven for - while he is a believer - it is those whose striving shall be thanked.*”** (17:18)

Allah had ordered the person here to fulfill two conditions for success in the next world:

1. To work for it, and not simply depend passively upon false wishes of forgiveness which may or may not take place.
2. To be a believer.

And when some think that belief in the Last Day is a mere article of faith, and an acknowledgement, their faith becomes like a tree that bears no fruit. Therefore, you find them being more afraid of the fires of this world than being afraid of the fires of Hell, while the fires of Hell are infinitely hotter. Their desire for the rewards of the world also became greater than their desire for the rewards of Paradise.

They may claim that they have become so busy and preoccupied that they forget to pray. And you can see them busying themselves, chasing after the world to collect its vanities, while they neglect the greater rewards of Paradise. Allah said,

*“The rivalry of worldly gain diverted [distracted] you,
until you visited the graveyards.
No, but you will soon know! Again, no, but you will
soon know!
No, but if you know with a knowledge of
certainty! You shall surely see Hellfire.
Then, you shall surely see it with the eye of certainty.
Then, you shall be surely asked that day about the
grace [bestowed upon you].” (102:1-8)*

For man will be asked about every favor: how he take it,
and how did he spend it.
If you ask them, “Don’t you believe in the Last Day?”
They will say, "Certainly we do!"

But what they say does not match up with what they do. In fact, they are busy with the affairs of the world and are totally unconcerned with the life to come. They leave it for saints and righteous people to arrange the matter of their sins with God, thus you may hear them saying “O Saint So and So; pray for us”. They rely on the piety and righteousness of others while they do not strive to be pious and righteous!

If they worked for the Next World, they would have the rewards of this world and the next. Allah said,
“So Allah gave them the reward of this world and the best reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves the doers of good.” (3:148)
And He said,
“Whoever desires the reward of this world, with Allah is the reward of this world and the Hereafter. For Allah is All-Hearing and All-Seeing” (4:134)

Whoever loves this world harms his next world

Love of the world has led groups of nations to *shirk*. Others have been led to hypocrisy and to sit back from *jihad*. Allah has warned the believers against imitating them and against not

helping in the struggle for truth,

“O You who believed, what is [the matter] with you, that when it is said to you ‘Go forth in the cause of Allah’, you adhere yourselves heavily to the ground?

Have you preferred the Life of This World than the Hereafter?

But what the joy of this world is but little compared to the next world.” (9:38)

The love of this world has led others to follow their desires to the point that their hearts became susceptible to every corruption, accepting every kind of iniquity, selling their religion and faith for the objectives of this life.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Tribulations and trials are like a dark night till a man used to be at the beginning of the day as a believer, but he becomes at the end of the day as a disbeliever, selling his faith for a pittance in the world.”⁽²³⁵⁾

The love of this world has led other people also to jealousy and rancor to the extent that they shed one another’s blood, until it ruined their next life.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Beware of greediness, for it had destroyed those who came before you. It led them to spill one another’s blood and to violate the bounds of honor.”⁽²³⁶⁾ Love of the world is the path to greediness.

Remembering the Last Day with these details must plant fear of the evil fate in anyone’s heart. It should move one to flee from Hellfire and to earnestly seek Paradise.

⁽²³⁵⁾ Muslim 118 Tirmidhi 2196.

⁽²³⁶⁾ Muslim, 2578.

The Prophet ﷺ was surprised by people who feared Hell but did nothing to ensure that they would escape from it, and by people who asked for Paradise but remained sleeping, too lazy to do anything to ensure that their desires would be fulfilled.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “It is astonishing to see one who would flee from hellfire sleeping, and one who would seek Paradise sleeping.”⁽²³⁷⁾

Allah has warned mankind with His Prophet ﷺ of this Day. The promise of Allah is truth and it is fact. Mankind is commanded to believe it. Nevertheless, he remains undecided about it. The believer says,

“This is what Allah and His Messenger promised us, and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth.”
(33:22)

While the disbeliever says,
“Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusion.” (33:12)

Allah has praised those who believe in the unseen, neither doubting nor wavering in their belief in it, describing them as rightly guided and successful.

The believer’s faith in the Last Day will cause him to obey Allah in all that he has been commanded to do and to leave aside that which is forbidden, especially if success or failure on the Last Day depends upon deeds.

The believer is removed from servitude to a transient world and from all bonds to it, and his dependence upon it is made small. Thus the Prophet ﷺ supplicated to Allah saying, “Our Lord, do not make the world our greatest concern and the only purpose of our deeds, and make not the Fire our destiny.”

⁽²³⁷⁾ Tirmidhi, 2604.

And when the people in the days of Moses were astonished with the treasures of Qaa'roon, then those among them who were given the knowledge said to them,

“Woe to you! The reward of Allah is best for one who's believed and done right, and none shall attain it [Paradise] except those who are patient.”
(28:80)

Hence, to prefer the next world to this world does not prevent one from living in the world, nor from enjoying Allah's bounty in it and spending of what he is given. But one must not come to prefer this to the Next world.

Some of the benefits of belief in the Last Day are humility, fear of Allah and wariness of pride that this belief brings into one's heart. Allah has reserved Paradise for the humble and the righteous people of the earth:

“That Home of the Hereafter We make for those who seek no exaltedness in the earth nor corruption. And the best consequence [outcome] will be for the Godfearing [those who fear Allah].” (28:83)

And He told us that He prevents people from guidance as a consequence of their arrogance,

“I will turn away from My signs [guidance] those who act arrogantly in the earth without truth. [Until] if they see every sign, they will not believe in it, and if they see the way of guidance, they will not take it for a way. And if they see the way of error, they take it for a way. That is because they have rejected Our signs and they were heedless of them. Those who have rejected Our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter, their deeds have become worthless. Will they be rewarded except for what they used to do?” (7:146-147)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “No one in whose heart there is an atom’s weight of pride shall enter Paradise.”⁽²³⁸⁾

When the believer hears this *hadith*, he will oblige himself to be humble, in the knowledge that Hell is the abode of the proud. His concern and his longing for the reward of the Next Life will drive out all traces of pride from his heart.

Among the benefits of belief in the Last Day are patience and perseverance. Allah said,

“And none shall attain it except those who are patient.” (28:80)

And He said,

“The patient will certainly be paid their reward without reckoning.” (39:10)

Therefore, the believer is patient in this world, longing for Allah’s reward in the next.

To those whose hopes are only for this world and its bounties, Allah will give a portion of what they desire, and then they will be deprived of the rewards of the Next life.

Allah said,

“Whoever desires the present life and its adornment, We shall fully repay them for their deeds, and they will not diminished [any].

Those are the ones for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but Hellfire. And vain is what they worked therein, and worthless what they used to do.” (11:15)

And He said,

“Whoever desires the harvest [reward] of the Hereafter, We will increase for him in his harvest. And whoever desires the harvest of This World, We give him some of it, and there is for him no share in the Hereafter.” (42:20)

⁽²³⁸⁾ Muslim, 91; Abu Da’ud, 4091.

Therefore, love of the world and giving it preference to the
Next Life is the gate to every evil, and the path to *shirk* and
disbelief.

IJTIHAD*⁽²³⁹⁾ AND *TAQLEED

After *shirk* and innovation, the most common way that people spoil their faith is by blindly following tradition. Just as those who deny the worship of the Messiah are accused of being enemies of Christ, and those who deny the exaggerations of the Shias with respect to the Imams are accused of being enemies of the Household of Muhammad ﷺ and those who deny the worshipping of the graves of the pious and righteous are accused of being enemies of the pious and the righteous, so those who oppose the blind following of tradition are accused of being enemies of the four Imams who would scrap their *madhhabs*⁽²⁴⁰⁾ entirely.

Two good examples

The First Example: Imagine if a man who went to his doctor and the doctor said to him “You are infected with cancer. Then he went to another doctor, who said, “You have no cancer.

What would he do? Would he risk himself and choose the first because he does not like to be told that?

Should he say: I would prefer to take the word of the second doctor because the first claimed that I am sick, while the second said I am all right and I do not like to be told I am sick. Or would he try to find out more and then take the advice of the doctor whose opinion was closest to the truth?

And if each of them prescribed different medicine for him, would he stick with the doctor whose medicine was cheaper and easier to find? Or would he make his own inquiries, and that do not require him to be a doctor?

⁽²³⁹⁾ *Ijtihad* means to exert one’s effort by reasoning to differentiate right from wrong when no clear evidence could be obtained from the Quran or the Sunnah.

Another definition: the reasoning process by which Islamic laws are deduced after thorough research

⁽²⁴⁰⁾ *Madh-hab*: Is a school of thought whether legal or philosophical.

Why don't we do the same when we are confronted in the matter of religion by a contradiction between two schools of jurisprudence? If we are truly as vigilant for our welfare in the Hereafter as we are vigilant for our health, we will choose for ourselves that which appears to be the closest to the truth and the most correct.

Reasonable Questions to Ask

1. If blindly following (*taqleed*) of the scholars is obligatory, why then were they all reported to have said, "Do not imitate us"?
3. Did the scholars (Imams) to whom the four schools of jurisprudence are attributed really intend to found systems of jurisprudence which others after them would blindly follow, or did they rather devote themselves to the service of truth in the knowledge that they would sometimes be right and sometimes be wrong?
4. Did they enable those who come after them to take up this work where they left off and continue to search out the rulings and the opinions that were closest to truth with full fairness and without bigotry?
5. Are the thoughts of the four schools free from any error? If each is free from error, then why do we have four different *madh-habs* today?
6. When the four Imams disagree about a matter, then we know that the truth should most likely be with one of them, not all of them.
7. When we disagree about a matter, we should go to them, but when they themselves disagree among themselves do they go to other Imams or do they return to the Book of Allah and the *sunnah*? And do not forget that the scholars ordered us intensively to

do the same, and not to follow blindly, saying, “Do not imitate us, and when you find our words contradicting the *sunnah* of the Prophet, then throw away our words and stick to the Book of Allah and to the *sunnah* of His Prophet.

8. Did these Imams used to be angry with anyone who sought to distinguish the most predominant opinion among the four opinions of theirs, or did their flexibility, their understanding and broad-mindedness make them accept it? They were in fact endowed with tolerance and understanding which we seem to have lost today.
9. If a non-Muslim converted to Islam, what Imam should we order him to follow? Would not it be shameful to tell him that he should be selecting one of the four Imams and to follow blindly what *madh-habs* imposes? Would that be counted as an Islamic way of searching for truth? Would that give a good reputation to Islam? Is it an Islamic way to follow a person in everything, whether correct or incorrect? Is this fitting for the Muslims, the bearers of truth to the world, the bearers of the light of knowledge to the East and West to retreat to the darkness of ignorance?

The Second Example: Imagine what it would be like if people became so obsessed with the inventor of the first car (Ford) and believed that his design was perfect and no one can come after him and dare to suggest any modification or development, or he will be considered an enemy to the first inventor.

Imagine if they did not allow anyone to change the original design in any way, and insisted that to do so would be an insult and injury against its designer and an arrogant assertion of one’s superiority to him. If this had happened we would still be chugging

along today in eighty-year-old Model-T Fords, without any refinements.

The work of the scholars who came before us is not a revelation that must never be questioned or changed, and never be challenged. Indeed, to refine their work is a step toward the better, especially when we know that each *madh-hab* is not free of wrong decisions or verdicts (*fatwa*) simply because no matter how high degree of knowledge the scholar has, he is still a human being capable of making mistakes.

We must not become rigid, considering the words of the *imams* final and set in stone forever. If we did this then, what would be the difference between us and those who assert that their Imams (leaders of religion) are sinless and that any one who objects or opposes their Imams is opposing Allah? They believe that their Imams are infallible. This fanaticism goes against the methodology of the Imams al-Shafi'i, Abu Hanifa, Malik and Ahmad.

The Imams were always committed to the truth. They would revise their opinions when it became clear that the truth lay elsewhere. They did not care if any ignorant person accused them of contradicting themselves, because for them it was easier to be blamed by people today than to be blamed tomorrow by Allah, and because the point was that truth is worthier to be followed than men, unlike those who came after them and made men worthier than truth to be followed.

Abu Hanifa said, "We are people who say something today and contradict it tomorrow." He meant that if it became clear that they were wrong, they would not hesitate to change their views.

The Imams were so dedicated to the truth and not to anything else, that you find Imam Al-Shafii said "I have never debated someone but I wished that Allah shows the truth through him."

Therefore, those who warn against blindly following them are not denying the great remarkable work of these Imams, in fact, they are only warning people against something the Imams

themselves warned us about. They used to say, “Do not imitate us.”

We must be grateful to their remarkable work; we need to know their views, thoughts and understanding of the Qur’an and the *sunnah*, to investigate the truth among the four thoughts they have offered.

But we should not place their systems of jurisprudence and their *fatwas* above the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of His Messenger. We should not judge our differences by their words rather than by the Book of Allah and the *Sunna* of His Messenger. This is the blind imitation of which they all warned us.

Furthermore, who is he to claim that the schools of jurisprudence were four? Whoever thinks that he is mistaken. Al-Thawri had his system of jurisprudence, as did al-Awza’i, and Ibn Hazm. But although these no longer have any following, nevertheless they had followers before.

We know that the word “*shafi’i*” means one who follows the *madh-hab* and the methods of Imam al-Shafi’i. But what was the *madh-hab* which Imam al-Shafi’i followed? Was al-Shafi’i a follower of Shafi’i? Was Abu Hanifa a follower of Hanafi? Was Malik a follower of Maliki? Was Ahmad a Hanbali follower?

Well, let us hear their declaration of methodology. They all said, “If the *hadith* is *sahih* (authentically narrated), then that is my way “*madh-hab*.”⁽²⁴¹⁾ The authentic report of the Prophet is what I follow, in other word, The Prophet way is my “*madh-hab*.”

Al-Muzani, reported that Imam Shafi’i said, “If you find anything in my book that contradicts the *sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ then follow the *Sunna* and leave what I said aside, and do not imitate.” And he also said, “All Muslims agreed, that when the *Sunna* of the Messenger of Allah is clear, no one may leave it for the opinion of anyone else.”⁽²⁴²⁾

⁽²⁴¹⁾ See Al-intiqaa P. 145 For Ibn Abdil-bir. *Almeezan* P. 1:62 for Ash-sharani. *Almajmou* for Annawawi 1:63. *Al-hilyah* for Abuno-aim 9:106-107 .

⁽²⁴²⁾ *Siyar al-a’lam* 10/33 *Adab al-Shafi’i wa manaqibih*, 69.

The blind follower is the one who really does disservice to the methods of the Imams, for he is the one who is in fact not following the *madh-hab*. People have taken the Imams as icons which they blindly follow. They follow everything they said except for this: “Do not follow us blindly”.

Blind following is negative, a sort of training to limit or dwarf or incapacitate the mind of a person till he becomes unconcerned with proof or evidence for a position. He has an emotional attachment to a personality. He will not claim that his “Imam” is infallible, but his actions prove that this is what he truly believes.

It is well known that the *ijtihad*s of the Imams produced contradictory positions. Some would say that such and such a thing is permitted and others would say that is forbidden. And don’t be surprised when you find that correct positions on various issues are distributed among the various *madh-habs*. On one matter al-Shafi’i is right, and on another Abu Hanifa is right. Sometimes Malik is right and sometimes Ahmad, and so on and so forth. None of them is always right.

If they disagree among one another, then what should we be doing? Should we then use a referendum to select one of the four different decisions?

We must return to the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of His

Prophet ﷺ.

Allah said,

“And if you disagree over anything among you, then refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you [truly] believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is better way and better result.” (4:59)

Despite their gifts and their knowledge, the Imams are human beings and are not infallible. They have limits like all people do. Knowledge encompasses men but no man encompasses all knowledge.

The Hanafis may think that following al-Shafi'i is an insult to Abu Hanifa. And the Malikis may think that someone who follows Imam Ahmad is insulting Malik. But the person who searches for truth has the advantage of all of them and knows that none of them has a monopoly on truth.

TheIR Differ is OUR TEST

Allah tries the extent of our sincerity and our commitment to truth by the errors and the disagreements of our scholars. Their disagreements are a source of *fitnah* (test) for us; Allah tests us as He has tested those before us.

Ammar b. Yasir said (on the day Aisha took up arms against Ali, being wrong in her action), “By Allah she is the wife of your Prophet in this world and the next. But Allah is testing you with her to disclose whether you obey Him or her.”⁽²⁴³⁾

Why then should we not be tested with scholars like Ahmad, and al-Shafi’i, and Malik, and Abu Hanifa? These enormously gifted men had struggled with many issues and discovered right answers and proposed wrong ones, and they will be rewarded even for their mistakes⁽²⁴⁴⁾.

But the blind follower, who follows an error and knows that it is an error, is blameworthy and will not be excused.

It is true that the scholar who struggles to find the truth and makes an error will be rewarded for his effort. But the follower who stubbornly insists upon following a particular scholar’s opinion will not be rewarded for his stubbornness. Especially when his error is pointed out to him and he is given proof from the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* and he still insists and puffs himself up and pretends he did not hear anything. His argument is always the same, “Do you think my Imam did not know this?”

This is not to say that no one should follow a *madh-hab* or the opinions of any particular scholar, placing his faith in his confidence of the master. What it means is that such following

⁽²⁴³⁾ Bukhari, 7100.

⁽²⁴⁴⁾ The scholar has the right to try his best with the knowledge he has to search for the truth. Therefore, only he is rewarded for that even if he was mistaken, and those who have no knowledge are not rewarded if they speak without knowledge. The Prophet said, “The scholar who makes a reasoned decision (*ijtihad*) and is correct will receive two rewards, while he who does so and is incorrect will receive one reward”.

should be conditional. When it becomes apparent that truth lies other than in the *madh-hab* on any particular issue, then he should abandon the position of the *madh-hab* on that particular issue alone and follow the truth wherever it is.

If a follower of Imam Ahmad discovers that Imam Ahmad's opinion on a particular matter is wrong and that Imam al-Shafi'i's view is closer to the truth, then he must go with al-Shafi'i on that matter, not Ahmad. That is not to say that he may not follow Ahmad's opinions on any other matter.

If a follower of al-Shafi'i, for instance, places his confidence in this *madh-hab* and he is not aware of any error in the Imam's reasoning on any particular issue, then he may not be blamed for following him, even if in this case he is incorrect.

It is permissible for an ordinary person to follow any *madh-hab* he likes if he is not capable of discovering knowledge for himself, or if he is illiterate, but he must not become fanatical about the opinions of his *madh-hab* when it is made clear to him that a more correct position lies elsewhere. It is due on those educated men of religion to inform the ordinary persons of this fact.

Then, there is no harm done when ordinary believers innocently follow a wrong opinion of one of their Imams, so long as they are not aware of it, and so long as their intention is to place the word of Allah and His Messenger above that of the *madh-hab* and the Imam. If not, then they will become like those who said,

“And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has revealed,’ they say, ‘We rather follow what we found our fathers doing.’ What if their fathers had no sense in anything and were not guided right?” (2:170)

Fanaticism for *Madhhabs*

Fanaticism for *madh-habs* has become such that in a single village you can find four judges and four *muftis*, a pair for the Shafi'is and a pair for the Malikis and a pair for the Hanifis and a pair for the Hanbalis.

This has been the misfortune of the Muslim world. Each has his own Imam whom he follows in matters of *fiqh* and *aqeeda*. And in every town you will find four judges, each judging according to his *madhhab*. And in the mosque you will find four Imams, each leading the prayer for the followers of his *madhhab*.

The Muslims have begun to regard their *madhhabs* as kinds of political parties, denouncing followers of rival ones before all else.

And blind following has taken a geographical form, in other words, tell me where you are from, I can tell you your *madh-hab*.

If someone is from Morocco, then he is certainly a Maliki and if someone is from India, then he will be a Hanafi. It is impossible to imagine a Pakistani Maliki or a Hanbali Moroccan.

If Imam al-Shafi'i were to be brought back to witness the fanaticism that people have entered upon in his name, he would surely denounce them all.

Fanaticism is not a characteristic of the true faith

It is not fitting for Muslims, the bearers of truth and knowledge to the world, to fall victim to the disease of blindly following traditions, for which Allah criticized the nations:

“And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has revealed,’ they say, ‘Rather we follow what we found our fathers doing.’ Even though their fathers were understanding nothing, nor they were guided right?”

(2:170)

And in another verse,

“And when it is said to them, ‘Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger,’ they say, ‘It is enough for us what we found our forefathers doing.’ What! Even though their forefathers knew nothing nor were they guided.” (5:104)

This is not a thing that one should find among the nation that was brought out of humanity by truth, guidance and light. We should not find among them people who say to the Imams of the *madh-habs*, “We hear and we obey,” and to the Qur'an and the *sunnah*, “We hear and we disobey.”

Ibn Abbas denounced people who opposed the *sunnah* quoting support from Abu Bakr and Omar saying, “Would that stones fell upon you from Heaven! I tell you what Allah says and what the Prophet ﷺ says, and you tell me, ‘Abu Bakr says and Omar says!’”

Did not Abu Bakr himself say, “Obey me so long as I obey Allah among you, and if I disobey Him, then you must not obey.”⁽²⁴⁵⁾ This is sufficient to demonstrate that they were searching for the truth and for the *sunnah*.

When following tradition is permitted

There can be no doubt but that the scholars of the past have made a tremendous effort to clarify and organize all kinds of issues that are still relevant to us today, and that they left for us the fruits of their efforts and study. Each of them had his evidence and proof to support his positions and did the best that he could for us to choose the right evidence and the strongest support. All that is required of us is to examine their efforts and to compare their evidence, one against the other, and then choose that which is strongest. It is manifestly wrong for us to consider their opinions as final and beyond all examination and all criticism.

Our *hadith* sources have now been thoroughly examined and sifted through in a way that was not easily done before. We should not forget that the legal rulings of scholars are closely bound to these sources and depend upon the correctness of *hadith* or weakness in these accounts. It is well known that Abu Hanifa used the *hadith*, “There is no usury [*riba*] between a Muslim and a disbelieving enemy,” to support his ruling to permit *riba* bearing transactions between Muslims and disbelievers. He was not aware that this *hadith* account is not correct. It is certain that he would have revised his ruling had he known this, following the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ.

Imam Shafi’i decided that if someone touches his wife or a non-related woman, he loses the validity of his ablution, while it was

⁽²⁴⁵⁾ See book *Albidayah Wannihayah* V. 5 P. 248.

reported correctly that the Prophet ﷺ used to perform his ablution, then kiss his wife, then go to the mosque to pray. What should we do in this case? Should we leave what the Prophet ﷺ did and hold what Shafi'i said, would Shafi'i be pleased with this?

Those Whom Allah Protects—*Awlia*

Who are the *awlia*⁽²⁴⁶⁾ of Allah?
Who are the most praiseworthy among them?
How they may be recognized?
Should we confirm that they are *awlia* of Allah, and how can we
become one of them?

The central idea of *awlia* is one of love and proximity (closeness). It is the opposite of enmity, which depends upon dislike and distance.

Wali is a person who is near to Allah and beloved by Him and is someone who fits the description Allah has given of such a person: someone who believes and who fears Allah. Allah said,
**“Surely, the allies of Allah, there will be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.
Those who believed, and used to fear (Allah).
For them are good tidings in the present life and in the Hereafter.
There is no changing in the words of Allah, that is the great success”.** (10:62)

⁽²⁴⁶⁾ The *wali* of Allah is the one who is close to Allah and beloved of Him.
awlia is the plural.

Belief and fear of Allah are both characteristics of such a person.

The matter of *al-wilaya* and *wali* (one who is near to Allah) had been the source of much confusion and misguidance among people.

These ideas have been taken up by the *Sufi*'s who made the *wali* the cornerstone of their religion, much in the same way as the *Shias* do to their Imams, and they both claim infallibility for them. Both groups make fanatical claims and this is one such claim they share.

Sufis have made use of the matter of *wali*, creating among them corruption in faith and false imaginations that the *wali* of Allah is something other than what our faith teaches us about him. They have twisted ideas and the beliefs of the people to the point that they begin to believe in whoever was reputed to be a *wali* of Allah, even if they see in him what is against the *wilaayah* (friendship) to Allah, and contradicts what anyone would expect of such a person.

The *Sufis* duped people into thinking that a *wali* could outwardly live in contradiction to Allah's *shariah*, yet be obedient to it inwardly.

From this perspective some people began to think that the *wali* occupied an intermediary position between themselves and Allah, and that they could ask him to approach Allah on their behalf; they even would ask him for things which one should never ask of anyone but Allah.

They wrongly think that only prostrating to the grave is *shirk*. They wrongly think also that so long as they believe that Allah is One Creator, and they do not prostrate themselves before idols or graves, but they only go to graves and ask the deads to intercede with Allah on their behalf, they are still monotheists.

It escapes them that the first *mushriks* used to believe that Allah alone created the heavens and earth, but they used to ask the idols that they had fashioned in the image of their righteous men to help them approach nearer to Allah.

The Qur'an explains this truth:

“And those who have taken for themselves allies [protectors] besides Him [say], “We only worship

them that they may bring us nearer to Allah.”

(39:3)

And He said,

“Those whom you invoke apart from Allah are servants like you; so call them and let them respond to you, if you are truthful.” (7:194)

Allah said *“Those whom you invoke”* He did not say **“Those whom you prostrate to”** which proves that they used to worship human beings who died and whose graves were taken as places of worship.

Glorifying Graves and Exaggerating about the Righteous men is the Origin of the first age of ignorance (*jahiliyya*)

Many are those whose ignorance ensnares them in the diabolic trap that caused the first of mankind to associate others with Allah.

Ibn Abbas explained the verse:

“And they have said, `Do not ever leave your gods. And never leave Wadd, nor Sowâ_ nor Yaghûth and Ya_ûq nor Nasr.”⁽²⁴⁷⁾ (71:23)

He said, “These were the names of some of the righteous men from among Noah’s people. When they died, people put up statues and other images of them.”

Al-Tabari said in his explanation book of Qur’an *tafsir* that Ya’uq and Nasr were righteous men. They each had followers, and when they died their companions decided to make images of them to remind them of their leaders and encourage them to worship [Allah]. Others followed after them when they died and Satan deceived them into thinking that those who made the images used to worship them, and Allah sends the rain to people in their honor. So they worshipped them.⁽²⁴⁸⁾

It is quite clear from this that the origin of *shirk* began in the glorification of graves. Satan uses the graves of the righteous to delude mankind and urges men to venerate the burial places of

⁽²⁴⁷⁾These five were idols of the pagan Arabs.

⁽²⁴⁸⁾ Tabari, 12/29, 62.

their predecessors, and he urges man to denounce any who speak out against this and to accuse them of insulting the reputation of these righteous men. This is a corruption in belief in the oneness of Allah, and a return to the ancient Ignorance that Allah revealed many verses to stop.

Just consider the following *verse*.

“Those whom you call upon besides Allah are servants like you. So call upon them, and let them respond to you, if you are true!” (7:194)

If you invoke them, they do not hear your supplication, and if they heard, they would not respond to you, and on the Day of Judgement, they will deny your association. And no one can inform you like One who is well aware.
(35:14)

And who is more astray than he who invokes apart from Allah some one that never respond to him until the Day of Judgement, and they were unaware of their invocation and [They will be] when people are gathered, they will become enemies with them, and they will reject their worship [They used to address to them]” (46:4)

The Truth about *al-Tawassul*

Tawassul means to do something that will make you nearer to Allah. Allah said,

“O You who believe, fear Allah, and seek the means [of nearness] [waseelah] to Him, and strive in His cause that you may succeed.” (5:35)

It means, "to draw nearer to Allah by obeying Him, and doing the good work which pleases Him." That is how Ibn Abbas and other companions of the Prophet ﷺ explained the term (*waseelah*) in the verse.

Nevertheless, others continue to use the word *tawassul* in a completely different sense. For them this means seeking the aid of someone other than Allah. It means to offer supplication to someone other than Allah, to fulfill some need or to save them from some misfortune.

Hence, the same false and pagan concept of people in the *Jahiliyya* returned to take place among some people of our nation (*Ummah*). Those pagans used to say,

***“We only worship them that they may bring us
nearer to Allah.” (39:3)***

Those who corrupt the beliefs of people and then corrupt their behavior, obscure the link between man and his actions, and it was this link between deeds and belief that Allah stressed in the Qur’an saying,

***“[It is He] Who created life and death to test which
of you is best in deed.” (67:2)***

Rather, they tie themselves to the personalities of prophets and to righteous men, and try to insure their salvation by those who are near to Allah.

The thieves steal, the fornicators fornicate, drunkards drink their fill of alcohol. After that, they all come to the shrine of [saints] and throw some money at their graves or images so that something may happen in favor of them or that they may be forgiven for some offense, then they hope by that to solve their problem, and to ensure forgiveness and salvation.

In other words, they do every evil and they leave the matter with the saints to solve for them with their God. How nice that would be if it were true!

As a result of this, entire generations have been diverted from their faith. It is enough to visit the shrine of the righteous *wali* at the end of the week, or at the end of the month, or year, to ask him to seek Allah’s forgiveness for whatever they may have done.

They will cry a little when they arrive at the shrine. Humility overcomes them at the shrine but does not intrude upon their prayers, if they pray at all. Then they go back to their lives, doing as they have always done, turning away from Allah, depending on people for salvation instead of doing righteous deeds, and being themselves righteous as Allah created for them. This way drove people far far away from religion and stuck them deeply in sin and corruption.

These confused ideas about *awlia* among Muslims have come to resemble the notions of the Christians with regard to saints.

When Muslims build places of worship upon graves, they

resemble the Christians and the Jews who built seminaries and monasteries over the tombs of their saints. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah cursed the Jews and the Christians, who took the graves of their prophets and their righteous men as places of worship.”⁽²⁴⁹⁾

TYPES OF LEGAL *tawassul*

Human beings by nature seek all means to what benefits them, and seek all means to avoid hardship. If your child is sick, then you call a doctor, who will examine him and prescribe a course of treatment. This is a legal means of *tawassul* that Islam permits.

But if you visit a dead doctor at his grave and ask him to cure your child, or seek the assistance of an impostor or a faith-healer—a person who is ignorant of medicine and ignorant of religion and who depends upon demonic deception—is to violate the law which Allah revealed to His Prophet ﷺ. Then this is an illegal means of *tawassul*.

If you buy the doctor’s prescription and give it to your son to drink, then this is a legal means (*tawassul*), while if you take it and hang it on his neck as a charm, this means (*tawassul*) is illegal.

The forms of permitted *tawassul*

THE FORMS OF PERMITTED *TAWASSUL* ARE:

TAWASSUL TO ALLAH, CALLING UPON HIM BY 1)
HIS MOST EXCELLENT NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES.
ALLAH SAID,

“To Allah belongs the beautiful names. So call Him by them.” (7:180)

Like saying “Oh Allah, I ask You by Your most excellent names to forgive me my sins.”

2) *Tawassul* to Allah, calling upon Him by His greatest Names, as was related in the *hadith* of Boraida, who said that the Prophet ﷺ heard a man calling upon Allah saying, “Oh Allah, I call

⁽²⁴⁹⁾ Bukhari 3453 and Muslim 321.

upon You by bearing witness that You are Allah of Whom there is no god but You, the One, the Eternal and Absolute, Who begets not and was not begotten, and there is none like unto Him, that You forgive me my sins.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “By [Allah] the One in Whose hand is my soul, he has asked Allah by His greatest Names, by which anyone who calls upon Him will receive that for which he has asked.”⁽²⁵⁰⁾

3) *Tawassul* to Allah by one’s faith and good works. The evidence for this is the story of three men from among the Israelites⁽²⁵¹⁾ who once went into a cave and found the exit blocked by a great stone. They began to call upon Allah, mentioning the best of their deeds and asking Him to remove the stone, and the stone was moved. [Narrated by Bukhari 5974].

The evidence for *tawassul* by one’s faith, from the Qur’an, is:
“Those who say, ‘Our Lord, we have believed, so forgive us our sins and guard us from the punishment of Hellfire.’” (3:16)

It is permitted to seek *tawassul* to Allah with faith since faith in Allah and His Messenger is the most excellent deed in the sight of

Allah. A man once asked the Prophet ﷺ “What is the most excellent deed in the sight of Allah.” And he said, “Faith in Allah and His Messenger.”⁽²⁵²⁾

These are the types of *tawassul* which, the scholars agree, are permitted in Islam.

Allah has made for us legal ways of *tawassul* which should be enough for us to seek, rather than seeking it in ways for which we do not have solid evidence, or for which the evidence we have is weak. Weak evidence is insufficient to support a ruling, and we should not busy ourselves with arguments over forms of *tawassul* which are not clearly supported by those of *tawassul* which are supported by the Qur’an and the *sunnah*.

⁽²⁵⁰⁾ Tirmidhi (3471), Abu Da’ud (1493).

⁽²⁵¹⁾ Bukhari 2272.

⁽²⁵²⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

The MiRaCLeS OF honor for THE RIGHTEOUS

kARAAMAAT OF Awlia

Karaamah of *awlia* means the extra ordinary works that Allah supports His righteous people with, as a sign of honor to them.

Satan uses another trap, that is the super works of *awlia*, in order to deceive the people with.

Satan does things which normally are not within the power of humans to do, such as appearing in an image of a dead righteous man to make people think that this is an honor *karaamah* from Allah given to that righteous, which becomes to them a sign that he is a *wali*, close to Allah and beloved of Him. Finally, they make a shrine for him or build a mosque upon his grave and they ask him apart from Allah to draw them nearer to Him.

Perhaps a true *karaamah* may occur to a *wali* as an honor to him. But it should not be used as an excuse to ask him apart from Allah, because the most honorable one among the sons of Adam [Muhammad] said, "If you ask, ask Allah, and if you seek help, seek help from Allah."⁽²⁵³⁾

The scholars have warned us against this trap of Satan. It is reported that Imam al-Shafi'i said, "If you see someone flying through the air or walking on water, don't believe him nor be deceived by him, until you find out about his commitment to the laws of Islam."

The scholars stress that Allah's support and guidance in following of the *sunnah* and avoiding *bid'a*, and the sincere worship to Allah is the greatest *karaamah*. They said, "There is no greater divine favor than the favor of faith and of following the *sunnah*. Whoever is given that favor and then seeks a different favor is a liar and a cheater."

⁽²⁵³⁾ Tirmidhi Hadith No. 2518 Authentic.

None of the first generations of the Muslims, (the Companions of the Prophet) nor of those who followed after them used to expose his *karaamah* before the common people in the streets the way that some people do today. Those people are in fact deforming the truth about *karaamah*. Why not they use their *karaamah* at the battlefields against the enemies of believers if they possess such favors? But truth is witness that such people are in fact as little concerned as possible with the affairs of the Muslims.

As for the alleged “miracles” that others perform, such as sticking skewers into their bodies and other tricks performed by shamans and magicians, or claiming to know the future such as soothsayers and fortune-tellers do, these are not divine favors, rather they are perversions and evidence of being in league with the devils.

Some people speak to a devil, while thinking that he is an angel who has come to him with news of the unseen. That is why Bin Mas’ud, (a Companion) mentioned this saying: “The devil takes the form of a man and comes to people telling them lies and then leaves.” Later someone will say, I heard a man whom I know but don’t remember his name saying so and so...etc”⁽²⁵⁴⁾

The *Mu’tazalites* ⁽²⁵⁵⁾ categorically denied all kinds of *karaamahs*. This was an extreme reaction against the exaggerations of the Sufis, who often told tales of strange miracles. It would have been better for them to solve the problem of these Sufis in a way that does not lead to an opposite extreme.

Then other people came after them who agreed to confirm the existence of *karaamah*, but they made a weak distinction between

⁽²⁵⁴⁾ Muslim, 5.

⁽²⁵⁵⁾ *Mu’tazalites*, followers of the philosophical school of thought commonly called rationalism. They deny Allah’s attributes by giving them false meanings.

miracles of the prophets and the magic of the sorcerers, which led them to another sort of distortion of the truth.⁽²⁵⁶⁾

There is no doubt that the prophets performed miracles, such as splitting the moon and turning a staff into a snake. These were greater than any *karaamah* performed by the *awlia*.

The prophets have the Major Signs (*alaayatul-kubra*) while the *awlia* have the Minor Signs.

In fact, the Minor Signs are themselves a proof that our Prophet's prophethood is true. But it is false to say that what was a miracle to a prophet possibly may happen to a righteous one as a *karaamah* because revealing the Qur'an to our Prophet ﷺ was a miracle, while a *wali* could never claim to be given revelation similar to the Prophet ﷺ.

What is the Purpose of *Karaamah*?

There are, of course, reasons for a person being given *karaamah*, and an act of *karaamah* is not something that a person is able to perform whenever he likes. *Karaamah* has a noble purpose. It is to defend religion and preserve and protect the *sunnah*. It is to support what the Prophet ﷺ brought to us. Allah allows it to happen by the hand of a pious servant of Him, who is a follower of our Prophet's *sunnah*, and who detests *bid'a*.

An example of this is an incident that happened to Abu Muslim al-Khawlani. A person known as al-Aswad al-'Anasi once asked Abu Muslim, "Do you bear witness that I am the Messenger of Allah?" He said, "I do not." Al-'Anasi then asked him, "Do you bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah?" Abu Muslim said, "Yes." Al-'Anasi then threw him into a fire which Allah made cold and a safe place for him.⁽²⁵⁷⁾

⁽²⁵⁶⁾ For further information on the subject see, *Awlia Allah bayn al-mafhum al-sufi wa bayn al-minhaj al-sunni*, 118.

⁽²⁵⁷⁾ Ibn Kathir, *Al-bidaya wal-nihaya*, 6/267-9.

This favor of *karaamah* had benefited the Muslims and it had a most positive effect, for it disproved the false claim of al-‘Anasi to the prophethood and confirmed that Muhammad ﷺ was the last of the prophets. This is an example of a real *karaamah* which confirmed that Abu Muslim was a *wali* of Allah and which happened before a despot and a disbeliever who attempted by his false claim to contradict the Qur’an and the *sunnah*, and to divert people from the religion of Allah and send them into disbelief.

How far is that from what charlatans do, those who claim to be *walis* of Allah and perform tricks such as magicians and idol worshippers do in public places and in front of the common people, whose tricks end with sticking themselves with skewers, playing with fire and charming snakes?

If what they have is truly *karaamah*, then let them show us the effects of this on the faces of the enemies of Islam who oppress the Muslims throughout the earth, from East to West or at least the Middle East problem!

If they know the unseen, then let them disclose to the Muslims what their enemies have in store for them. If they are able to play with fire then let them stand and confront the fire of these enemies.

But if they do not do that, in fact, they lean and scrape before the enemies of Islam. Then their works are not *karaamah*, but rather tricks and deceptions. Such perversions are only another reason behind the twisting of ordinary Muslims’ understanding of their religion. They spread fables and fairy tales, and make people believe that righteous people have been given full authority to do what they want to do in the heavens or the earth.

Bearing Witness that a Person is a *Wali*

We give our witness to those whom the Prophet ﷺ gave witness that they are *awlia*, such as the ten Companions who were given good news of Paradise, and those who swore allegiance before the

Prophet ﷺ and the *Muhajarin* and the *Ansar*.
After that no one is permitted to speak about that of which he has no knowledge.

For Allah disallowed us to claim the pureness or to assert that so and so is a *wali* of Allah, since this is something that we cannot know. Allah has forbidden us from declaring the purity of our own souls. He says,

“So do not claim yourselves to be pure; He well knows who [in fact] fears Allah.” (53:32)

We do not know more about ourselves than others do. So how could we claim the purity of others, and or say that so and so person has been given honor by Allah, and that he is one of His most sincere believers and a *wali* of Allah, and proceed to laud him and honor him?

If someone says, this man is a *wali* of Allah, then you ask him: “Are you saying that he is one of the People of Paradise?” If he says, “Yes,” then he is a liar. If he says, “I do not know, but I hope he is one of the People of Paradise,” tell him, “Then it is better to say, ‘I hope he is a *wali*’. Then you must fear Allah and not say things about Allah that you know not. Allah has commanded you not to declare the purity of your own soul and so how can you declare the purity of another?”

The Prophet ﷺ once went to see Othman b. Mazh’un just after he had died. Um ‘Ala al-Ansaria was saying to the dead, “I bear witness to you, Abu al-Sahib, that Allah will be honoring you.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “How do you know that Allah will show him His favor?” She said, “But, I don’t know.” He told her, “As for him, his Lord has brought him what surely must come, and I hope the best for him. Yet by Allah, I do not know what He will do with me nor with you, and even I am the Messenger of Allah.” She said, “By Allah, I will never assert the purity of anyone after this.”⁽²⁵⁸⁾

The Companions once saw a man fighting valiantly against the disbelievers and he slew many of them. The companions were pleased by his courage and praised him lavishly. The Prophet ﷺ told them, “Surely, he is one of the People of Hellfire.” The Companions said, “How could we be among the People of

⁽²⁵⁸⁾ Al-Bukhari, 1243.

Paradise if he is one of the People of Hell?” One of the Companions went to follow him, and found he had been wounded and was near death. He had placed the hilt of his sword against the ground with the point of it at the center of his chest. Then he fell upon it killing himself. This Companion then went back to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “What happened?” And the companion told him about the suicide. Then the Prophet ﷺ said, “A man may do the deeds of the People of Paradise as it is look to people while he is really one of the People of Hellfire, and another may do the deeds of the People of Hellfire while he is really one of the People of Paradise, and verily, the (most considerable) deeds are the sealed (ones of deeds).”⁽²⁵⁹⁾.

Another man died in battle and the Companions began congratulating him as a martyr. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Certainly not. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, the booty which he has taken without giving others their share is flaming a blazing fire on him in his grave.”⁽²⁶⁰⁾

As we have seen, the companions were confused and almost deceived by this matter of the two men whom the Prophet ﷺ said “They are in Hellfire”, until they thought they were *wali* of Allah.

Even though the companions were the most *wali* among people after Prophets. But they were human beings and had no knowledge of the unseen. It may happen that a man appears to be *wali* as it may occur to people’s mind, while Allah sees his bad intention in his heart while people can only see the work and not the intention.

This is why the Prophet ﷺ said, “A man may do the deeds of the People of Paradise as it is looked to people while he is really one of the People of hellfire.”

⁽²⁵⁹⁾ Al-Bukhari, 6606.

⁽²⁶⁰⁾ Al-Bukhari, 6707.

And when some people praised Abu Bakr, he said, “Oh Allah, do not blame me for what they say, and make me better than what they think about me, and forgive me for what they know not.”

This is the Islamic way which many people today have swerved from. And many leaders of *bid'a* and of perversion in religion have taken advantage of the ignorance of people, till they gradually brought them into every *bid'a* and *shirk*. They have led them to believe that the *wali* of Allah is someone with a white beard and a black cloak and a big rosary whose feet and hands people kiss and seek blessings by touching him, and who teaches them the ways of *bid'a*.

Allah has neither taken a foolish or ignorant person as “*wali*” to make him His friend, nor an innovator who adds innovations in Allah’s religion. But His real *awalia* (friends) are those who commit themselves to follow His Book and the *sunnah* of His

Messenger ﷺ.

And while Allah banishes those who compete with one another vainly, He will take for a *wali* anyone he pleases, perhaps a carpenter or a baker or whoever is deserving of such an honor. Unlike those to whom people bow down on their knees and kiss their hands and feet.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “May one be unkempt, dusty, driven away from doors, and no one cares for (whereas he is held in honor by His Lord), if he swears by Allah (to give him what he wants), Allah will fulfil his oath.”⁽²⁶¹⁾

By this, he meant that someone whom others value little and whom they drive from their homes with disdain may be a *wali* to Allah and beloved of Him. Even if he swears by Allah, Allah will answer him, as a favor to him.

⁽²⁶¹⁾ Muslim, 2622.

This is because Allah's values and measures are different from how people measure people. Men may value a person by his wealth and ease, which may count for nothing with Allah.

The way Allah values things is different from people's way. Importance, in people's eyes, is often a matter of how much money a person has, or of the color of his skin, or of the nation to which he belongs. But the importance before Allah is a matter of the belief that is in one's heart and the fear he holds for Allah. He says,

“The most honored one among you with Allah is he who is most Godfearing.” (49:13)

The door to *wilaya* (friendship) of Allah is accessible and entry is granted for any one who seek it, it is not an exclusive club of the sheiks as the Sufi's believe, or of the Imams as the *shias* think. It is not the preserve of the saints, as the Christians would have it.

The evidence for this is to be found in this *hadith*. A man asked the Prophet ﷺ about what Allah had made obligatory upon him? The Prophet ﷺ replied, “You must fulfill [your obligation] to pray, and to pay *zakat*, and to perform the Pilgrimage to the House [of Allah] if you are able.” Then the man said, “By Allah, I will do this. Nothing less and nothing more.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “He will be successful (to enter Paradise) if he is true to his word.”⁽²⁶²⁾
And surely no one will enter Paradise unless he is a *wali* of Allah!

The Most Excellent of Allah's Protected Friends

The most excellent of the *awlia* of Allah are the Prophets. And the most excellent of the prophets are the messengers. The most excellent of the messengers are five and the most excellent one of these was Muhammad ﷺ.

⁽²⁶²⁾ Al-Bukhari, 6953.

The most excellent of the *awlia* after the Prophets are the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othman, and Ali, and then the ten who were given the good news of Paradise.

The most excellent of the *awlia* of this Nation are its scholars, for Allah does not take an ignorant person as a *wali*. A *wali* grows in knowledge, acts upon his knowledge, benefits people with it more and teaches them what is permitted and what is forbidden. Thus, al-Shafi'i said, "If the scholars [the knowledgeable] who act upon their knowledge are not *awlia* of Allah, then Allah has no *awlia*."⁽²⁶³⁾

Enmity and friendship may meet in a person

The *wilaya* (loyalty) to Allah increases and decreases as faith increases and decreases. Sometimes Allah's love for him increases and sometimes it decreases according to his good deeds or bad deeds, whether a person is obedient or disobedient.

The matter of *wilaya* is as the matter of faith. One whose *iman* (faith) is stronger and whose fear of Allah is more intense will be closer to Allah in terms of being His *wali*.

A *wali* of Allah may fall into sin or error despite his piety. This is not to say that he is no longer a *wali* of Allah, but Allah dislikes his disobedience, and He likes the remainder of his *wilayah*.

That is why you find that someone can have two different characteristics, such as Islam and (minor) *shirk*. People who have faith in their hearts can also have something of *shirk*, such as *riya'a*.⁽²⁶⁴⁾ And in some hearts you will find faith and something of hypocrisy, or Islam and something of corruption and disorder. The mere existence of this in the heart does not mean that faith is gone.

⁽²⁶³⁾ Siyar a'lam al-nobala, 10/53; al-Bayhaqi, *Manaqib al-Shafi'i*, 2/155.
⁽²⁶⁴⁾ The kind of *shirk* that comes from doing good works so that others will see it and so on

Can a person say “I am a *Wali* of Allah?”

The answer is yes and no.
This point requires some explanation,

If one’s intention is to say that he has taken Allah and His Messenger and those who believe as his protectors, that he is a soldier of Allah and one of His party, that he gives his Loyalty to Him, we must not be in any doubt but that this is what is required of every Muslim. We should all be proud of this.

But if one’s intention is to say that Allah loves him and is pleased with him, and that he is one of the people of *taqwa* who fear Allah as He should be feared, then this is not permitted of anyone, since Allah knows in truth those who fear Him.

“So do not claim yourselves to be pure; for He well knows who [in fact] fears Allah.” (53:32).

KUFR: a Contradiction of Faith

In Arabic, *kufir* means to cover something up or conceal it. It has this sense in the Holy Qur'an 48:29 where the word *kuffaar* is used to refer to farmers who cover seeds with earth. The image is applied to disbelievers who cover up truth, like farmers cover seeds with earth, and deny what they are not excused to deny, as did Pharaoh and his people when they saw the miracles performed by Moses.

“And they denied them, though their [inner] souls were convinced thereof out of injustice and haughtiness.”
(27:14)

According to Allah's Law, to deny an essential thing of Islam, either entirely or partially, is an act of disbelief. An example of this is to challenge the profession of faith, that there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Messenger, or to argue that something which is obligatory upon Muslims is not obligatory, such as denying the obligation of prayer, or to argue that something which is forbidden to Muslims is permitted, such as fornication or the taking of interest. Only those who are new to Islam could be excused for such ignorance.

Disbelief is to deny something that is essential or conditional to Islam. There are two kinds of disbelief. A greater disbelief, and a lesser one.

Greater disbelief:

Greater disbelief is the denial of essential thing, such thing without which Islam does not occur. This results in all of one's good deeds being swept away. Consequently, if a person dies in this state, he will be cast forever into Hell. Such a person will be cast out of the community of Muslims and will no longer have any right to the protection of his blood or money.

Greater disbelief may take the form of a doctrinal disbelief, verbal disbelief, or active disbelief.

- Doctrinal disbelief is to deny an article of faith, such as to deny any of the names or qualities of Allah, or to liken Allah to His creatures.
- Verbal disbelief is to insult Allah, His religion, or His Messenger.
- Active disbelief is to commit an act of blasphemy, such as throwing the Qur'an onto rubbish heaps, as shamans and sorcerers do in an effort to endear themselves to the devils.

There are four kinds of greater disbelief:

1. **Disbelief of denial (charging Prophets with lie).** Allah said,

“It is not you (Muhammad) who they slander, but the evildoers are denying the signs (revelation) of Allah.” (6:33)

And He declared their disbelief saying,

“But those who disbelieved deny [prophet’s truthfulness], and Allah well knows best what they are hiding.” [within themselves]” (84:22-23)

And on the Day of Resurrection, He will tell them:

“Were not My Signs [verses] recited to you, and you were denying them?” [calling them lies].” (23:105)

2. **Disbelief of refusal and rejection,** even without slander. For example, a disbeliever acknowledges that the messenger came with truth but he is too haughty and proud to listen or to obey, and he disdains the truth. Allah said,

“Indeed, My verses came to you, yet you denied them [cried them lies], and were arrogant and were among the disbelievers.” (39:59)

And He said,

“Woe to every sinful liar. Who hears the verses of Allah recited to him, then persists arrogantly as if he had not heard them. So give him tidings of a painful punishment. And when he knows something of Our verses, he takes them in ridicule. There will be for those a humiliating punishment.”

Behind them is Hell [awaits] them, and nothing of what they had earned will avail them anything, nor those whom they have taken as protectors besides Allah. And they will have a great punishment.” (45:7-10)

And He said about Pharaoh,
“*And he behaved arrogantly and his soldiers in the land without right, and thought they would not be returned to Us.*” (28:39)
And He said
“*And they denied them, though their [inner] souls were convinced thereof out of injustice and haughtiness.*”
(27:14)

3. Disbelief of doubt: Allah told us that the disbelievers are full of “*Pride, haughty, and dissension.*” (38:2). And that they are “*in doubt, amusing [and] playing.*” (44:9)
And He tells us that one of the reasons for their disbelief is that they would say,

“*Has the Revelation been sent down to him out of us? No, but, They are in doubt about My Revelation. But they have not yet tasted My punishment.*” (38:8)
They also used to tell their messengers,
“*But we [really] are in doubt about what you invite us to.*” (11:62)

4. Disbelief of turning away and abandoning of truth:
The disbeliever does not learn truth and does not care to act upon it. Allah said,

“*But those who disbelieved, from that which they are warned, are turned away.*” (46:3)
And He said,
“*And no sign comes to them from the signs of their Lord but they turn away therefrom.*” (6:4)

It is possible for a person to commit one of these major acts of disbelief, but still did not disbelieve as a result. This can happen when a person says something in ignorance, or if he says something absentmindedly without meaning it, or if he confounds his words and says something mistakenly, such as the one who

said, “Oh Allah, You are my servant and I am Your Lord,”⁽²⁶⁵⁾ He said it wrongly, but unintentionally because of happiness.

Lesser Disbelief

Lesser disbelief is the denial of something without which perfect Islam does not occur.

This kind of denial detracts from one’s good works but does not take a person out of Islam. And person of this kind will be under the will of Allah. If Allah wishes, He will punish him, and if He wishes, He will forgive him. Like greater disbelief, lesser disbelief may also result from a conviction, from a word or a statement, or from a physical act. Mujahid (an early scholar) explained this following verse:

“Man is not weary of supplicating for good [things], but when evil touches him, he is hopeless and despairing. And if We let him taste mercy from us after some harm has touched him, he will surely say, ‘this is mine [by my effort]. And I don’t think the Hour will occur, but if I’m returned to my Lord, there will be the best for me with Him. We will surely tell those who disbelieved what they did, and We will surely make them taste a massive punishment. And When We show favor to man, he turns away and distances himself, but when evil touches him, then he is full of long supplication.” (41:49-51)

Mujahid said, “This is like a person who says, ‘This is my money and my inheritance from my father,’” ignoring the fact that everything he owns has come from Allah, Who may give whatever He pleases or take away whatever He pleases. This kind of disbelief is called *kufr al-ni’ma*; this means ‘a denial of Allah’s blessings.’ Allah mentions this in the Qur’an with respect to the inhabitants of a certain village:

⁽²⁶⁵⁾ Muslim, 2747.

“And Allah has given an example: a city that was safe and secure, and its provision coming to it in abundance from every place. But it denied the blessings of Allah, so Allah made it taste hunger and fear by what they used to do.” (16:112)

And He also said,

“They know of the favor of Allah, then they deny it, and most of them are disbelievers [ungrateful].” (16:83)

Some of the acts of lesser disbelief are sodomy with one’s wife or having sexual intercourse with her while she is menstruating and going to fortune-tellers and astrologers and believing what they say.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and believes in what he says, or who comes to his wife while she is menstruating or comes to her in her backside has absolved himself of what was revealed to Muhammad.”⁽²⁶⁶⁾

Another act of lesser disbelief is the killing of a Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Slandering a Muslim is an act of transgression and killing him is disbelief.”⁽²⁶⁷⁾

⁽²⁶⁶⁾ Ahmad and Abu Daud. *Sahih*.

⁽²⁶⁷⁾ Bukhari, 6044; Muslim, 64.

Ruling by other than what allah has revealed

Is it Greater or Lesser Disbelief?

The scholars have discussed four different cases where a ruler rules by some law other than the Sharia. These are:

1. A person who rules according to man-made laws and believes that these are better than the revealed law of Allah. He has committed an act of greater disbelief.
2. A person who rules according to man-made laws and believes that these are just as good as the revealed laws of Allah. He has committed an act of greater disbelief.
3. A person who says, "I am ruling according to man-made laws, although I believe that the *shariah* is superior to them, nevertheless, it is permitted to use other laws and not only Allah's Law." He has committed an act of greater disbelief.
4. A person who rules according to man-made laws and believes that he is committing a sin for which he may be punished because it is not permitted for a Muslim to rule by any law other than that which Allah has revealed. He has committed an act of lesser disbelief.

Nevertheless, we can realize today that persisting attempts to distance Allah's Law from ruling should not be confused with the various forms of denial described above. This is in fact compliance to the West which has conspired against God's religion on earth, and set up secular rules as an alternative to Allah's Law.

The West is convinced that these new laws are superior to the laws they used to live under.

The grave errors of the Catholic Church that ruled in Europe for many centuries encouraged them to take such action. But their fanaticism, pride and arrogance prevented them from entertaining the possibility that the religion they followed might be wrong.

Instead, they dismissed this idea and observed the heritage of their fathers, who grew up with this religion, and honored the traditions of their environment. The only solution for them was to relegate religion to a corner of their lives and they decided to relieve the church of its political responsibilities. This only added their miseries.

But they were not really serious about atheism. Religious fanaticism and discrimination on the basis of religious belief are still very common. Their failure to abolish religion demonstrates that regardless of the religion people follow, it is still necessary and natural for human beings to be religious basically, no matter what kind of religion, but basically man needs religion.

People may worship stone idols and the origins of their religion may be lost to them in the mists of time, but they will still not abandon it, even when it is clear to them that their faith is empty and false. The Qur'an criticized this attitude saying,

“And thus We did not send a Warner before you [Muhammad] into a city except its wealthy⁽²⁶⁸⁾ among them said, ‘We found our fathers on a way, and we’re following their footsteps’. He [the Warner] said, ‘What if I brought you better guidance than what you found your fathers following?’ (43:23-24)

And again:

“And when it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has revealed’ they say, ‘Rather, we follow what we found

⁽²⁶⁸⁾ The wealthy are mostly taking advantage of the poor, and the Prophets carry the truth that threatens their interests such as corruption alcohol, women, and the money they make by the idols and pictures they built to make them pledge money to them. The Prophets ordered them to destroy them and to turn in worship to Allah alone and rather make their vows to Allah and give alms.

our fathers [doing].’ Even though their fathers understood nothing nor were they guided?” (2:170)

And again:

“And if it is said to them, ‘Follow what Allah has sent down, they say, ‘Rather, We follow what we found our fathers following.’ Even though the Devil was inviting them to the punishment of the Blaze?” (31:21)

The West wants the Muslim world to follow their example and adopt secularism. Whoever follows them faithfully and treats Islam the way Christians treat their religion, then he becomes one of them. There can be no distinction between those Christians who have done this and those Muslims who have done it. Both of these people share the same position with respect to the Sharia: they have both adopted a new religion which they both follow in the same way.

This kind of apostasy is something that was unknown to Muslims until recently. Even the most corrupt and tyrannical leaders of the Muslims in the past used to rule their countries according to the Sharia. They would never have been able to imagine that a day would come when an ignorant person would stand up and call for the separation of religion and politics. The cowardly enemies of Islam are busy waging a war against the Muslims, using the Muslims themselves as their first line of attack.

It is important to stress the point that this Nation, even at its very worst moments, never, ever committed such an act of disbelief as to turn away from the Sharia of Allah, to banish it from the center of power, or to replace it with man-made laws, in the way that Muslims are doing today, in these, the darkest times in the history of Islam.

Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy is a form of disbelief, and like disbelief, it is of two levels:

1. Greater hypocrisy: Is to declare belief with tongue, while the heart is filled with denial, such as denying the Prophet of Allah, or rejecting some part of the revelation that he brought to

us, or hating that Islam should become victorious over its enemies, or taking secret pleasure in the misfortune of the Muslims and their subjection to the disbelievers.

This is called “**doctrinal hypocrisy**” and it is the hypocrisy which Allah refers to when He says, “***Surely the hypocrites shall be in the deepest pit of Hell.***” They shall be in the darkest pit of Hell, even though they keep up the appearance of being Muslims in the world, and are being treated as Muslims.

2. Lesser hypocrisy is hypocrisy in one’s deeds. This is what is referred to in the *hadith*, “The signs of the hypocrite are three: when he speaks, he lies; and when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he is given trust, he betrays it.”⁽²⁶⁹⁾ Another narration includes, “If he enters into a discussion, he quarrels and acts immorally, and if he makes a covenant he betrays.”⁽²⁷⁰⁾

A person who gathers in him both *iman* and hypocrisy is still a Muslim, so long as his *iman* and his Islam are stronger than his hypocrisy. If his hypocrisy is stronger than his *iman*, then he would deserve to be called a hypocrite.

accusations of hypocrisy

A common sickness spread among people is the accusation of others of offenses of the heart, of which no one else could have any knowledge, except for Allah. So someone may accuse his friend of hypocrisy (*nifaq*) or of doing something only so that others may see him do it, (*riya’a*). One of the best images of Islam occurred when Allah detailed the names of all the hypocrites in

Madina to His Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ did not announce them as a lesson to us of what is proper and civil behavior, but he told their names secretly to Huthayfa bin al-Yamaan. Although he could have announced this to everyone, he did not. Because of this, Omar ibn al-Khattab said,

⁽²⁶⁹⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

⁽²⁷⁰⁾ Nisa’i 8/117, *sahih*.

“In the time of the Prophet ﷺ people used to be taken (judged) by revelation. The revelation has now ceased, and now we judge you by what appears to us of your deeds. Whoever shows us good, we will trust and favor, and we have nothing to do with his intention (inner soul). Allah will judge him for his intention. And whoever appears to us to be bad, we shall neither trust nor favor, even though he says that his intention is good.”⁽²⁷¹⁾

Accusation of disbelief

It is the right of Allah to reveal a person’s disbelief, and so no one may declare anyone to be a disbeliever unless Allah has declared him to be a disbeliever. No Muslim is permitted to say that so and so is a disbeliever unless he has evidence of this that is as clear as the noonday sun.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever says to his brother, ‘Oh disbeliever’ [know] that one of them deserves to be so called,” and in another narration the *hadith* says, “his words will come back upon him.”⁽²⁷²⁾

It is easier to accuse someone of theft, fornication, and corruption than to accuse him of disbelief.

One of the worst slips of the tongue is to accuse a person of degeneracy or disbelief, apostasy, or especially of hypocrisy. For the principle is that so long as a person still appears to follow Islam, he is to be regarded as a Muslim. We should always give him the benefit of the doubt, until we have solid evidence to the contrary.

One of Satan’s tricks, and one of the things he whispers into the ears of people, is that we should be in doubt, until we have evidence to the contrary.

We should take a lesson from what happened to Usama bin Zaid, may Allah be pleased with him. He related,

⁽²⁷¹⁾ Bukhari, 2641.
⁽²⁷²⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

"The Prophet ﷺ sent us on a raid. I found a man who said, 'There is no God but Allah!' so I killed him. Later I was concerned for what I did, so I went to the Prophet ﷺ, and told him what I did. He said, 'Oh Usama. Did you kill him [even] after he said, 'There is no god but Allah?''" I said, 'Oh Messenger of Allah, he said it fearing I would kill him.'

The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Did you break [open] his heart to see whether he spoke in truth or not? What will you do to [LA ILAHA ILLALLAH] (i.e the testimony) when it comes at the Day of Judgment?' He said this three times until I (Usama) said, "I wished I had become Muslim after this [sin]."⁽²⁷³⁾

What happened to Usama should be a good lesson for every Muslim.

It is surprising to find people who are careful to avoid usury, who avoid meat that is not *halal*, who keep far away from alcohol and illicit sex, but who do not avoid slandering and backbiting their Muslim brothers, whether they are living or dead, and accuse them of all kinds of corruption and even of disbelief. They do not realize that this is just like taking usury (*riba*).

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Among the worst kinds of usury is to attack the honor of a Muslim," and in another narration of this *hadith*, he said, "To insult one's honor is the worst of usury."⁽²⁷⁴⁾

The Prophet ﷺ informed us that a man may, without noticing it, say a word that may raise the wrath of Allah, and be cast into Hell for seventy years (only to reach its bottom).⁽²⁷⁵⁾ One may think that his word is insignificant, while with Allah it is great.

"You utter it with your tongues, and said with your mouths what you have no knowledge of, and you think it of little value, while with Allah it is very great." (24:15)

⁽²⁷³⁾ Bukhari, 4269.

⁽²⁷⁴⁾ Al-Albani, *Silsilat al-ahadith al-sahihah*, no. 1433.

⁽²⁷⁵⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

It is amazing that this person who backbites, slanders, and judges other of apostasy and disbelief, has refused to deal with usury out of fear of Hellfire!

The Consequences of declaring a Muslim's disbelief

To accuse a Muslim of disbelief is a very serious matter that has far reaching consequences for the accused. To accuse someone of disbelief means that:

1. He is considered as an apostate, which means according to the *Shariah* (Law of Allah) that his rights are even less than those of the Jews and Christians living under Islamic law. The Sharia has made the slaughtered meat of the Jews and Christians legal for Muslims, but the slaughtered meat of an apostate is forbidden to Muslims.

While it is not permitted to force Jews and Christians to adopt Islam, the apostate must return to his religion or face death. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever changes his religion, kill him."⁽²⁷⁶⁾ To confirm a Muslim's disbelief is to call for his execution in this world and for his being forbidden from Paradise in the next.

This is worse than merely calling for him to be killed. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Who-ever charges a believer of *kufir* (blasphemy) it is the same as killing him."⁽²⁷⁷⁾

2. That he is no longer permitted to remain with his wife and they must be separated from one another, for the scholars agree it is not permitted for a disbelieving man to marry a Muslim woman or remain with her.
3. After he dies or faces the death penalty, he should not be washed or buried in any Muslim cemetery.
4. His children should not inherit from him and he should not inherit anything from any Muslim.
5. Even his family should perform no funeral prayer for him.

⁽²⁷⁶⁾ Bukhari 6922.

⁽²⁷⁷⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

6. He will never be given mercy or forgiveness from Allah.
7. If he dies in a state of apostasy, he will be cast forever into Hell, and will never be taken out of it.

These are very serious consequences and so anyone who would accuse another of disbelief should think carefully about it before he speaks.

One who commits major sins will not remain in Hell forever

It is well known that major sins do not take a person out of Islam, and that the person who commits them will not remain in Hell forever. It is up to Allah what He does with him, He may punish him and He may forgive him, but as a sinner but not a disbeliever, even if he is punished, his final result will be in Paradise. Thus you can see that thieves, killer, and gamblers still hope for Allah's mercy, while one who asserts a son to Allah should hope no mercy, For *shirk* (setting partners with Allah) is the greatest sin, but most people do not know. Allah said, ***“Allah forgives not that a partner is associated with Him, but He forgives other than that to whom He wills.”*** (4:48)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “My *shafa-ah* (intercession) will be for the people of *kaba-er* (major sins) of my Nation.”⁽²⁷⁸⁾

Secondly, Allah uses words for the types of sins such as *kufr* [disbelief], *shirk* [associating another with Allah], *fisq* [transgression], *dhulm* [oppression], and *nifaq* [hypocrisy]. These words are technical terms in Sharia law.

Some of these sins are more serious than the others. Each of these words describes a condition, and each of these conditions has a particular consequence. Each one of these words is divided into major sin and minor sin, but many people who use these words do not distinguish between the major and the minor one.

⁽²⁷⁸⁾ Ahmad 3/212, Abu Daud, 4739. *Sahih*.

major *kufr, shirk, fisq, dhulm, and nifaq* means to come out of Islam, and to contradict the absolute faith. And these cause eternal abode in Hellfire.

minor The consequence of sin is that a person will not be out of Islam, but his sin contradicts the completeness of faith, so faith and religion are lacking.

We call this “*kufr* less than *kufr*”, or “*nifaq* less than *nifaq*” and so on.

A person who has committed a minor sin will not abide forever in Hell, but the matter will be decided by Allah. If Allah wishes, He will punish him and if He wishes, He will forgive him. Then he will be taken out of Hell and granted Paradise by Allah’s Mercy.

A degenerate Muslim should not be denied his faith absolutely, nor should absolute faith or complete belief be ascribed to him. But we can say he is believer by the little faith that remains with him, and he is dissolute because of his dissoluteness, unless his degeneracy and corruption are greater than his faith, as Allah said about Satan,

“And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam," and they prostrated, except Iblees [Satan] He was of the jinn,⁽²⁷⁹⁾ so he departed [i.e., disobeyed] the command of his Lord. ” (18:50)

The scholars have agreed that the person who disobeys Allah, whether in big or little things, so long as he has not associated partners with Allah, will not be declared to be a disbeliever. What happens to him on the Day of Resurrection will be a matter for Allah to decide: if He wishes, He will punish him, and if He wishes, He will forgive him. The evidence of this is in the Qur’an.

⁽²⁷⁹⁾According to Chapter 55, Verse 14, the jinn are creatures made of smokeless fire, but not normally visible to humans. They are spirits with the free will to choose right or wrong. Satan, The Devil, is a jinni and not an angel, although he was with the angels. According to Chapter Two, Verse 34, his disobedience was the result of pride.

Allah said,

“Allah forgives not that a partner is associated with Him, but He forgives other than that to whom He wills.” (4:48)

And He said,

“O You who believed, prescribed for you the punishment for those murdered - the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But whoever overlooks from his brother [the killer], then there should be a suitable follow-up and a payment to him with good conducts.” (2:178)

In this verse the murderer is described as the ‘brother’ of the one who was killed, despite the fact that killing is a major sin. Because of this we cannot go so far as to say that killing takes a person out of the community and confirms his disbelief.

According to the *Sunnah* the Prophet ﷺ said, “Come and swear allegiance to me, promising not to associate anything with Allah and not to steal and not to have illicit sex, and not to kill your children, and not to invent lies to cast against one another, and not to disobey me in what is right. Whoever of you agrees to this will have his reward with Allah, and whoever fails in any of these, then his matter is left with Allah, If He pleases, He will punish him and if He pleases, He will forgive him.”⁽²⁸⁰⁾

The Prophet ﷺ also said, “Do not go back to be disbelievers (*kuffaar*) after I am gone, some among you cut the neck of others.”⁽²⁸¹⁾ In this *hadith*, the word *kuffaar* does not mean the greater disbelief that takes one out of Islam, because Allah has said,

“And if two factions among the believers fight, then reconcile between them.” (49:9)

And in the next verse He said,

“The believers are but brothers, so make reconciliation between your brothers.” (49:10)

⁽²⁸⁰⁾ Bukhari, 3892.

⁽²⁸¹⁾ Bukhari, 4403.

Allah describes them as believers and as brothers, despite their fighting and killing one another. This is a major sin. While major sins are described as acts of disbelief, this is lesser disbelief because it is less than *shirk*. This kind of disbelief is actually called *kufr al-ni'ma*, which means ungratefulness or a denial of Allah's blessings, because it is the opposite of gratefulness, and because the one who disobeys Allah becomes able to sin by Allah's provision and sustenance.

An example is a man who has not eaten for many days and has become very weak. If a woman came to him and invited him to have sex with her he would be unable to do so because he had been prevented for days from food which supplies him with the energy and power he needs to practice sexual action or whatever.

If it were not for Allah's blessings upon us, none of us would have the means to disobey Allah. So we are using the blessings of Allah to disobey Allah. This is *kufr al-ni'ma*: denial and misuse of Allah's blessings.

The Angel Gabriel has said, "Whoever dies and did not associate anything with Allah will enter Paradise, even though he may have had illicit sex or stolen."⁽²⁸²⁾

People did have illicit sex in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. For example, there is the incident of Ma'iz who came to the Prophet ﷺ asking that he be punished according to the Law for having had sex illegally. The Prophet ﷺ instructed some of the companions to stone him to death and he submitted to this without anyone forcing him.

There was a similar story of a woman who came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked to be punished according to the Sharia for having had sex illegally. The Prophet ﷺ told her to nurse her child until it was weaned and then come back to him. When she came back he ordered her to be stoned to death.⁽²⁸³⁾

⁽²⁸²⁾ Bukhari, 1237.

⁽²⁸³⁾ Bukhari, 6824; Muslim, 1693.

An event like that should not pass by us without contemplating the extent to which belief had penetrated into this society. Here we have two people who came to the Prophet ﷺ, and demanded that they be punished according to the Sharia, knowing that the punishment for what they did was stoning.

But they knew also that if they were punished for this sin in this world, they would not be punished for it in the next world, and that punishment here expiates the punishment tomorrow.

The Prophet ﷺ gave Ma'iz a chance to withdraw his request and keep quiet about what he had done. He told him "Perhaps you only kissed her." But Ma'iz insisted that he had had sex with her and so the punishment was carried out.

That does not mean it is better to declare one's sin, but it is preferable to shield one self with Allah's covering, for Allah likes to cover the sins of His servants. Thus the Prophet ﷺ said, "He who had been involved with any of these rubbish (major sins) let him keep himself covered with Allah's covering, for whoever comes to us, we will apply the penalty (of Allah) against him".

After he had been stoned, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Pray for the forgiveness of Ma'iz". They said, "May Allah forgive Ma'iz b.

Malik." Then the Prophet ﷺ said, "The repentance of Ma'iz b. Malik would be enough for an entire nation and more. Should I not tell you what Allah has done with your friend? He had forgiven him and taken him into Paradise."

And in another narration, "And by the One in Whose Hand is my soul, he is even now indulged in a river of Paradise."⁽²⁸⁴⁾
About the woman he said, "Her repentance would be enough for seventy of the people of Madina."⁽²⁸⁵⁾

⁽²⁸⁴⁾ Muslim, 1691; Abu Daud, 4428; Tirmidhi, 4428.

⁽²⁸⁵⁾ Muslim, 1696.

The Prophet ﷺ did not use against them any police or guardian to make sure that they came back to meet their punishment, but it was belief in Allah that pushed them to come by themselves and choose to be punished. That shows what kind of faithful life the Prophet ﷺ had established. Even the sinners of that time are much better than today's people!

There is the incident of Himar, who came to the Prophet ﷺ demanding to be beaten for having drunk wine. Someone said, "May Allah curse him," and the Prophet ﷺ said, as he did on many other such occasions, "Do not curse him. By Allah, For I as I know, he loves Allah and His Messenger," and in another narration, "Do not say that to your brother, do not incite Satan against him. Say, 'Oh Allah make him repent to You, Oh Allah, forgive him.'"⁽²⁸⁶⁾

The Prophet ﷺ of course knew how much Himar loved him, and the proof of his love is that whenever Himar came to Madina he would go and borrow some fat from an owner shop and take it to the Prophet as a gift. The Prophet ﷺ would always take it and laugh. Then one day the owner shop came to the Prophet ﷺ to complain that Himar did not pay his debts. In the end, the Prophet paid for the fat that Himar had given him.

The Prophet ﷺ ordered the companions to beat a person, but forbade them from insulting and cursing their brother in faith, for his faith had not disappeared because of the great sins he had committed.

⁽²⁸⁶⁾ Bukhari, 6780; Abu Daud, 4477.

Fundamental Issues in the Matter of *takfir*

The first rule is that no one may be declared to be a disbeliever simply on the basis of acts of disbelief, unless a doctrinal disbelief is behind it. Otherwise, an act of disbelief does not cause a person to be out of Islam. The companions and the scholars from the first generations of Muslims all agree upon this point.

A companion whose name was Hatib sent a letter to the enemies of the Muslims (the Quraish) warning them of the coming of Muhammad and his soldiers to them. Allah revealed this to His Prophet, and then he called Hatib and asked him, “Why did you do that?” Hatib said, “I did not do that as to prefer disbelief and love for pagans, but I did it to protect my family in Makkah from the harm of the people of Quraish against my family, who have to live with them”. Then the Prophet ﷺ forgave him.

Note here that the Prophet ﷺ did not rush to punish him before asking him why he did that. So he did not charge him with disbelief, despite his action being an action of disbelief.

The second rule is that we do not rush to declare a person to be a disbeliever simply on the basis of something he has said. A person may say words of disbelief in ignorance or mistakenly, or he may say something that can be taken in more than one way. When this happens, we do not instantly say, “You have disbelieved!” Rather, we say, “You are mistaken.” We should not rush to drive someone out of Islam who is keen to remain a Muslim, and who is afraid to become a disbeliever.

Abdullah b. Omar said that the Prophet ﷺ heard Omar ibn al-Khattab swearing by his father. The Prophet ﷺ told him, “Allah has forbidden you to swear by your fathers. Whoever swears an oath, let him swear it by Allah or else keep quiet.”⁽²⁸⁷⁾ This is in spite of the Prophet ﷺ having said, “Whoever swears by anything other

⁽²⁸⁷⁾ Bukhari and Muslim.

than Allah, has disbelieved or associated something with Allah.”⁽²⁸⁸⁾

Some people who had newly embraced Islam asked the Prophet ﷺ to make for them a blessed tree on which to hang their swords, like the one the pagans used to hang their swords upon in order to have their swords blessed. The Prophet ﷺ became angry and said, “Allah Akbar! ... You have said the same as the companions of Musa said when they wanted him to make them a god like the gods of their enemies.”⁽²⁸⁹⁾ He compared their request to that of the Jews who said, “Make us a god” although he did not charge them with disbelief.

The third rule is that no one may be declared guilty of doctrinal disbelief until all conditions for this have been met and no extenuating circumstances have been supported. Extenuating circumstances are things which may excuse him, such as ignorance, or misinterpretation, or being forced to act against one’s will. It may be that several extenuating circumstances are present in a particular case, each of which would be enough to prevent a person being declared a disbeliever. Some examples of this are:

One of the companions, Qudama bin Madh’oon, and some of his friends decided that drinking alcohol was permitted after they misunderstood the verse:

“There is no blame on those who believed and done righteousness for what they have eaten [before], if they they [now] they have feared Allah and done good deeds, and then feared Allah and believed, and then feared Allah and done good, for Allah loves the doers of good.”
(5:93)⁽²⁹⁰⁾

⁽²⁸⁸⁾ Tirmidhi, 1535 (*Kitab al-iman wal-nudhur*, its *isnad* is *sahih*.)

⁽²⁸⁹⁾ Tirmidhi, 2181, its *isnad* is *sahih*.

⁽²⁹⁰⁾ This verse was revealed following the prohibition of alcohol, which came after the battle of Uhud. Some of the companions asked about their friends who had been killed in the battle and who used to drink alcohol. Then this verse was revealed to make it clear that those who had done something before it was prohibited would not be held responsible for it, as long as

Qudama thought that this meant that there would be no blame on him if he drank alcohol, so long as he feared Allah, and believed and did good works.

It is well known that the Qur'an clearly prohibits the drinking of alcohol, and that anyone who knows this and still claims that it is permitted, has committed an act of disbelief.

Qudama used to know that that it was prohibited to drink alcohol, but the companions still did not declare him to be a disbeliever, because he based his words upon a wrong interpretation.

When Omar ibn al-Khattab was told about Qudama and his friends, Omar discussed the matter with a group of the companions. They agreed that if Qudama and his friends acknowledged the prohibition of alcohol, then they should be flogged because it is the right of Allah that the punishment for drinking alcohol be carried out. But if they insisted that drinking alcohol was permitted by the Qur'an, then they should be killed, that is to say they would be punished for apostasy and disbelief. Omar told Qudama, "You made it wrong. Had you feared Allah and believed, and had done good works, you would not have drunk alcohol."

Then he punished Qudama and those who were with him, according to the *Sharia* (Law).

Later Omar was told that Qudama had almost despaired and thought that Allah would not forgive him. Omar sent him a letter and told him, "I praise to you Allah of whom there is no other god but He, ***The Forgiver of sin, the Acceptor of repentance, severe in punishment***" (40:3). And I do not know which of your sins is greater: the first one when you have permitted what was forbidden?, or the second, when you despaired of Allah's mercy."⁽²⁹¹⁾

There is a difference between disbelief in general (*takfeer mutlaq*) (i.e common disbelief) without naming a particular

they feared Allah and were righteous. See, Al-Askalani, *Fath al-bari*, 8/278 and also, al-Tabari, *Tafsir*, 5/24.

⁽²⁹¹⁾ Abdul Razaq, *al-Musanuf*, 9/240.

person, and charging a particular individual of being disbeliever
(*takfeer mu-ayyan*).

To pass judgment about the a word or an act of disbelief is one matter, but to pass judgment about a person who said the word or did the act of disbelief is another matter.

Someone may speak a word of disbelief, or commit an action of disbelief in ignorance. Then it is necessary to teach him.

A believer may say a word of disbelief, but he does not deserve to be called “disbeliever” when there are circumstances of ignorance or otherwise.

To label someone as *kafir disbeliever* requires nonexistence of that which interdicts disbelief, and that which necessitates the existence of its conditions.

Legal conditions must be met, and there must not be extenuating circumstances before we may declare the disbelief of a person.

**the way of bid'a people
in accusing their opposers with blasphemy**

Ibn Taimiya said, “The people of *bid'a* have their own way of accusing their opponents with blasphemy. Their way combines **ignorance** and **oppression**.”

“They invent an innovation in religion inconsistent to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, and the *Sunnah* of all of the companions. Then they accuse of blasphemy those who disagree with their innovation. The Shias, for instance, prefer Ali to the three [Caliphs who preceded him] and place him at the head of the Imams.

They declare that whoever disagrees with them about this is a disbeliever. Also, the *Jahmiya* decided to reject the divine qualities of Allah and to declare that whoever disagrees with them about this is a disbeliever.”

“But the scholars of *Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'a* (adherents of the *Sunnah* and its followers), those who hold fast to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions, are endowed with the way of:

KNOWLEDGE AND JUSTICE AND MERCY.

They know the truth by which they will be going consistently with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, and free from innovation. They are moderate with one who oppose the *Sunnah*, even if he wronged them, just as Allah said,

“O you who believed, be firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just. That is nearer to piety [Godfearing]. And fear Allah, for Allah is Well-Acquainted of what you do.” (5:8)

They show mercy to people, and intend all good, guidance, and knowledge for them.

They do not initially wish them evil nor wish that wrong should befall them, but when they blame them and show them their ignorance and oppression, they intend by that to show the truth and to be merciful, they wish to enjoin right and forbid wrong, and to let all people's religion be to Allah, and that the word of Allah should be high and supreme”.

“So the acts of the believers who follow the *Sunnah* are given sincerely to Allah, and are consistent with the *Sunnah*. While the acts of those who oppose them are neither sincere nor right, but rather a matter of innovation and *bid'a* following.

That is why they are called *Ahl al-bid'a wal-ahawaa*, that is, “the people of innovation and of vain desire.”

“That is why the *Ahlu-Sunnah* (adherents of the *Sunnah*) do not charge of blasphemy the one who differs with them, even if he calls them disbelievers.

For disbelief is one of the ruling of Allah's Law *Sharia*. It is not the right of men to use it for themselves to punish others thereby, like someone who lies against you or commits adultery with your family. You should not lie against him or commit adultery with his family because lie and adultery are forbidden.”

“Likewise accusing someone of being a disbeliever is only Allah’s right. So no one is really a disbeliever except those whom Allah and His Messenger judge to be so.”

“Furthermore, accusing a particular person of disbelief is dependant upon the Messenger’s evidence of which if he denies, then he deserves to be called disbeliever; otherwise, not everyone who is ignorant of some aspect of religion should be considered disbeliever.”

“That is why I was saying to the *Jahmiah* - those who used to deny that Allah is over His throne- If I agree with what you say, I will become a disbeliever, because I know well that what you say is blasphemy. But to me you are not disbelievers because you are ignorants”.⁽²⁹²⁾

⁽²⁹²⁾ Arradd Alal Bakri, Pp. 256- 260.

Declaring the disbelief of a particular person

The adherents of the *Sunnah*, do not judge anyone to be a disbeliever until he is confronted with the proof, and until the conditions of disbelief are applicable to him and the interdictors of disbelief are not applicable. That is to say, all legal conditions must be met and there must be no extenuating circumstances or excuses.

They do not say about any person, who performs his prayer and turns to our Qiblah is destined for Hell or for Paradise except for those whom the Prophet ﷺ gave us news about, such as Abu Lahab, who will be thrown into Hell (111:3) and the ten companions whom the Prophet ﷺ said would enter Paradise.

It is a very serious matter to say that such and such a person will enter Paradise or will go to Hell. It could lead to the person who says it himself being thrown into Hell. It does not matter whether you say he will go to Heaven or he will go to Hell. Both statements are wrong because the person who makes them has invented a lie against Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ mentioned a man who said to another, “By Allah, Allah will not forgive so and so.” Then Allah said, “Who is it that swears by Me that I will not forgive so and so? I have forgiven him and cast down all your good deeds.”⁽²⁹³⁾

In another narration this incident happened between two Jews who were at odds with one another. One of them was a habitual sinner while the other was pious and devoted himself to the worship of Allah. Whenever this pious Jew came across the other one he would tell him, “Desist!” The other man told him, “Leave me and my Lord. Were you sent to be my keeper?” The pious Jew said, “By Allah, Allah will not forgive you.” Or he said, “By Allah, Allah will not take you into Paradise.” Both of their souls were taken to the Lord of the Worlds. The pious Jew was asked,

⁽²⁹³⁾ Muslim, 2622.

“Did you have knowledge of Me?” or, “Were you able to command what is in My Hand?” Allah said to the sinful Jew, “Go and enter Paradise by My Mercy.” For the other one He said, “Take him to Hell.”⁽²⁹⁴⁾

Consider the seriousness of this pious Jew’s sin. He devoted himself to the worship of Allah, but he went too far when he told his friend that he would go to Hell, and took for himself an authority that belongs to Allah alone. This single statement was a monstrosity before Allah, worse than hundreds of sins combined.

The Dual Nature of the Soul

Among the most basic rules of *AhluSunnah* (adherents of the *Sunnah*) is the belief that a single person can combine in himself elements of disbelief, hypocrisy, truthfulness, faith, *shirk*, *tawhid*, piety and lewdness.

It does not mean necessarily when a person has a branch of belief that should be called a believer, even though we call that branch “belief”, unless the branches of belief outweigh the branches of disbelief.

And it does not mean necessarily when a person carries a branch of disbelief that he should be called a disbeliever, even though we call that branch “a disbelief”, unless the branches of disbelief outweigh the branches of belief.

If a believer commits an act of disbelief, he does not deserve to be called a “disbeliever” absolutely. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever swears an oath by other than Allah has disbelieved or associated another with Allah.”⁽²⁹⁵⁾

Secondly, disbelief and faith both have foundations and branches. As modesty is a branch of faith, so lack of modesty is a branch of disbelief.

And they [*AhluSunnah*] do not hope that a person whose blasphemy was proven to die in a state of disbelief, nor do they affirm that one who was in life in state of disbelief died in the state of disbelief. For a disbeliever may revert even at the last moment

⁽²⁹⁴⁾ Abu Daud, 4901.

⁽²⁹⁵⁾ Tirmidhi, 1535.

before his death. Because of this, every time they used to say when quoting his errors, “Allah knows best about what he died on” in other words: Allah only knows whether he died a disbeliever or not.

Give him proof (Hujjah) before Accusing him

When a blemish of disbelief appears on a Muslim, we should first have a good opinion of him, and not to distrust him, but rather consider that perhaps he spoke in ignorance, or didn't say it purposely to abandon faith, but he thought it a matter of faith.

In this case, it is our obligation to explain to him that what he said was wrong, and we should have strong and clear evidence.

When Thalabah the companion sent a warning letter to the people of Quraish reporting to them that the Prophet ﷺ is on his way to them, the Prophet ﷺ did not order him to be killed immediately, but he asked him, 'What made you to do this?'

Perhaps he did not know about this evidence before we showed him, and had he known it, he would have changed his opinion. Perhaps he knew this evidence but did not understand it properly, or perhaps he had been faced with doubts greater than what he could bear so may Allah forgive him for that, or perhaps the person who disputed with him thought that he had given him firm evidence, while in fact, his evidence was weak.

Because of this, evidence or proof, must meet certain criteria to be considered so:

1. Evidence should be taken from the Qur'an, and its verses should be relevant to the same matter disputed over.
2. Evidence should be taken from the *Sunnah* narrated correctly (*sahih* sources). Weak narrations are not acceptable for this purpose.
3. Evidence must be clear and unambiguous; it must never be vague.
4. Evidence should be strong enough to dispel all doubt when it is presented to a person.

The point of view or opinion that you adopt should not be considered evidence that you force others to adopt. But rather evidence (*hujjah*) comes from the Book of Allah or from a confirmed, (*sahih*) *hadith* from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

Then, if a person rejects this evidence, he should be warned that he is in danger of disbelief. If he persists, then it becomes possible to declare him to be a disbeliever if he reject the evidence from Allah and His Prophet.

TALKING ABOUT OTHERS SHOULD BE WITH KNOWLEDGE AND JUSTICE

Words spoken about others must be based by knowledge and justice, not by ignorance and injustice. And they should be coupled with the fear of Allah and with caution, since caution can protect us from persistently in dealing falsely.

Great words of the Prophet ﷺ

That is what the Prophet ﷺ warned us about when he said, “He, whose intercession stands against any of Allah’s limits (intercede against Allah’s punishment law be applied) has already opposed Allah in His affairs. And whoever dies and leaves a debt, [its repayment] will not be [given back] in silver or gold, but rather in good deeds and bad deeds. And whoever disputed falsely while he knows better will stay within the wrath of Allah until he withdraws. And whoever says about a believer something that is not true, Allah will let him dwell in *ridgatul khabaal* [a pool of foul and stinking water squeezed out of the people of Hell] until he is withdrawn from what he said...”⁽²⁹⁶⁾

However, he who speaks of others, should not forget the good qualities that they have, even if they belong to different groups than his. For this leads to ignoring the good qualities of others of whom we speak against until they seem like pure evil. We are not allowed to ignore someone’s many good deeds just because of his little faults.

A fair-minded person will forgive the few mistakes of his brother because of the sea of his good deeds and noble acts, for scum disappears in the large body of water.

And I am always amazed when I think about the *hadith* of the Jewish whore, who gave a drink of water to a dog that was dying of thirst. Allah thanked her for this act and took her into Paradise.”⁽²⁹⁷⁾ If the mercy of Allah is so wide as to encompass this

⁽²⁹⁶⁾ Ahmad, 2/70; al-Hakim, 2/27.

⁽²⁹⁷⁾ Muslim No. 2245

woman, why are we so reluctant to show mercy to our brothers,
despite their faults, which are nothing compared to the fault of this
woman.

Swiftness to Judge Others is a Form of Extremism

It is a characteristic of the extremists that they are quick to judge others, and are severe and unyielding in the judgments they make. You will always know them by their eagerness to judge and to condemn others.

The Qur'an teaches us that unfairness is the fellow of the desire following.
Allah said,

“O David, We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people rightly, and do not follow desire, lest it leads you stray from the way of Allah. Those who go stray from the way of Allah, for them is a severe punishment, for having forgotten the Day of Account.”
(38:26)

And He said,

“O You who believed, stand firm in justice as witnesses for Allah, even if it is against yourselves, or parents or relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not desire lest you not be just. And if you bend [truth] or decline [to do justice], then Allah is Well-aware of what you do.” (4:135)

What was it that led the *Khawarij* astray, if not fanaticism and a disregard for justice? They ended up condemning people for disbelief whom they had no right to condemn. People such as the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. They took up arms against the Muslims and let the disbelieving worshippers of stone idols be. These people were called “People of Caprice” (*Ahlul-Ahwa'a*) because their judgement was based on their desire not on the book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ.

A great hadith worthy to read

This is a great *hadith*, when Al-Miqdad bin-Aswad asked the Prophet ﷺ, “Do you see, if I faced a disbeliever (in a battlefield), who began to fight me, and then cut off one of my hands by his

sword, then he took a shelter by a tree (to protect himself from me) then, when I knelt down to kill him he said, 'I become Muslim, and I bear witness that there is no god but Allah (*La-ilaha Illallah*), Should I kill him'?"

The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Do not kill him'?"

He said, O Prophet, but he cut off my hand, then he said his word (i.e declaration) after he cut my hand off!"

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not kill him, for if you kill him, he would be in your position before killing him, and you would be in his position after he said his word (of *La-ilaha Illallah*)."⁽²⁹⁸⁾

This *hadith* indicates the importance of fairness and patience, even in the most critical circumstances, where a person loses his hand and he is able to retaliate, but the moment he hears his enemy declaring the word of testimony he must forget about his injury and be happy that the one who cut off his hand has become a believer, and never say "My enemy said (*La-ilaha Illallah*) to save his neck from my sword.

The Prophet ﷺ blamed Usama for killing a non-Muslim soldier in the battlefield, who said (*La-ilaha Illallah*) before being killed.

The Prophet ﷺ said to Usama, "Did you kill him after he said, 'There is no god but Allah?' Usama said, "Oh Messenger of Allah, he said it fearing I would kill him." The Prophet ﷺ said, "did you open his heart to see whether he spoke in truth or not? What will you do to [LA ILAHA ILLALLAH] when it comes at the Day of Judgment?"⁽²⁹⁹⁾

How Satan takes advantage of extremism

Extremism is an epidemic and a dangerous disease. If one does not vaccinate himself against it and take precautions, he will be falling into great evil. Extremism is a seed that we should eradicate from our hearts, lest it grow. For if it does not surface through a

⁽²⁹⁸⁾ Muslim No. 95.

⁽²⁹⁹⁾ Bukhari 4269.

form of Sufism, or Shiism, or Christianity, it must take another form sooner or later.

The khawarij were the first phenomenon of extremism which appeared in Islam. They did not believe in the 'infallibility' of the Imam as the Shias do, and they didn't exaggerate about the *awlia* of Allah, as the Sufis do. Their fanaticism led them to charge the Prophet's companions of apostasy.

Thus, the people of extremism go too far with their wrong judgments and overstep the bounds and limits till they fall in either of the two extremes:

- Either they praise someone or something excessively until it leads them to defend that which is false.
- Or they dispraise it excessively until they reject the truth. They must go too far, because of their eagerness to go too far, and their preparation to accept any twisted idea and any perversion of truth.

The simple remedy for this disease is to be found in the following verses:

And let not the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just. That is nearer to piety [Godfearing]. And fear Allah, for Allah is Well-Acquainted of what you do. (5:8)

“So follow not desire lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then Allah is Well-aware of what you do.” (4:135)

“And, if you speak, be just, even if [it concerns] a near relative, and fulfil the covenant with Allah. That is what He has instructed you so that you may remember.” (6:152)

“Allah commands you to return the trusts to their owners, and if you judge between people that you judge justly. An excellent is that which Allah instructs you! For Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.” (4:58)

One becomes able to maintain his equity and justice by freeing himself from emotional attachments and loyalties to groups and

party traditions, and attaches himself to the truth. As some scholars say “So and so, is beloved to us, but the truth is more beloved to us than him”.

Then it becomes easy for one to behave towards others with justice and fairness.

We have to train ourselves to be just, by dealing justly with our friends and those whom we love, in order to be able to deal justly with our enemies and those whom we hate.

How easy is it to be just to those whom we love, but how difficult to be just with those whom we hate, but if a person is unable to deal justly with his friend, he is more unable to deal justly with his enemy. And fairness is one of the fruits of knowledge.

Is Ignorance an Excuse?

The scholars have said that anyone who denies any fundamental issue of faith which is necessary to know, has disbelieved. This would include permitting illicit sexual intercourse, or the drinking of alcohol, or murdering, or anything else, which everyone knows is forbidden.

Ignorance cannot be an excuse in the case of something which is obviously known to everyone. However, what is precisely is known to everyone, with respect to religious matters, is proportional and may differ, from person to person, from time to time or from place to place. Something may be well known to everyone in one country, but generally unknown in another country where there is a higher level of ignorance.

THE PROOF THAT IGNORANCE IS AN EXCUSE

There is Quranic evidence for ignorance as an excuse, this includes:

- *“And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups until, when they reach it, its gates are opened, and its Keepers say to them "Did there not come to*

you messengers from yourselves, reciting to you the verses of Your Lord, and warning you for the meeting of this day of yours?" they said: Yes, but the word [decree] of punishment has come to effect upon the disbelievers ." (39:71)

• *"Every time a Group is cast therein [Hellfire], its Keepers ask them "Did no Warner come to you?" they said: Yes, a Warner came to us but we denied and said, 'Allah has not sent down anything.'" (67:8-9)*

• *"And never would We punish until We send a messenger."* (17:15)

• *"Allah would never let a people astray after He has guided them until He makes clear to them what they should avoid."* (9:115)

• *"Messengers [We sent] as bringers of good tidings and warners lest people will have no argument against God after the messengers. And Allah is exalted in might, Wise."* (4:165)

• *"And [remember] When the disciples said, "O Jesus, son of Mary, can your Lord send down to us a table [spread with food] from heaven?" he said, 'Fear Allah, if you are believers.'" (5:111)*

They said this to Jesus and he did not tell them that they had disbelieved in Allah.

These verses indicate that Allah does not intend to punish people, but rather to teach them the way to their Lord. They will not be held accountable before having been given knowledge.

As for the evidence from the *Sunnah*:

• **The first *hadith***, narrated by Abdullah Bin Mas-ood said: The Prophet ﷺ said, "No one is ever more self-respect than Allah, and for this, He has forbidden shameful sins

whether it is hidden or apparent, and no one loves to be praised more than Allah, for this He has praised Himself, and no one is fonder of excusing others than Allah, for this He sent Prophets to give good news and to warn.” And in another narration it says, “for this He sent messengers and revealed Books.”⁽³⁰⁰⁾

- **The second *hadith*** is related by Hudheifa, who said: “The Prophet ﷺ said, “A man, who was about to die, when he lost hope of living said to his family, ‘When I die, gather for me a large heap of wood, and make a fire to burn my body, and when the fire eats my flesh and reaches my bones, and when my bones burn, then crush them into powder, and gather the ashes, then wait for a windy day, and throw my ashes into the sea. For by Allah, if Allah will ever be able to get hold of me, He will punish me more severely than anyone has ever been punished before.’ And so they did as he asked them to do. Allah ordered the ashes to gather, then He asked him, ‘What made you do this?’ The man said, ‘I was afraid of You.’ So Allah forgave him and extended His mercy to him.”⁽³⁰¹⁾

Conclusion

This man doubted Allah’s power to bring him back. No one disputes that this is a form of disbelief. But this man was ignorant and did not know this, and he was a believer who feared the punishment of Allah. As for the scholars of this nation, who strive with their whole being to discover truth, and who faithfully follow the *Sunnah*, they are more deserving of forgiveness than this man was.”⁽³⁰²⁾

- **The third *hadith***: relates that Aisha asked the Messenger of Allah, “Does Allah know everything that people conceal?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Yes.”⁽³⁰³⁾ Here,

⁽³⁰⁰⁾ Al-Bukhari, 4637.

⁽³⁰¹⁾ Al-Bukhari, 3452; Muslim, 2934.

⁽³⁰²⁾ Ibn Taimiya, *Majmu’ al-fatawa*, 3/229.

⁽³⁰³⁾ Narrated by Ahmad 6:221. There is a mistake in the text of this narration in Muslim.

Aisha is asking whether Allah knows everything. To deny that Allah knows everything is like denying that He is capable of all things. Nevertheless, her question did not make her a disbeliever.

- **The fourth *hadith*** was related by Abu Waqid al-Laithi. He said, “We went with the Messenger of Allah, [to fight] at Hunein, and we had only recently entered Islam. The Arab polytheists had a small tree where they used to gather in devotion and upon which they used to hang their weapons [to be blessed]. We said, “Oh Messenger of Allah. Make us a blessing-tree like the blessing-tree they have.” He said, “Allah Akbar! (Allah is Great) It is the path [of those before you] you have said just like what the Israelites said to Moses, ‘Make us a god like their god.’ He said, ‘You are indeed ignorant people!’” (7:138). You would follow the path of those who came before you.”⁽³⁰⁴⁾.

The *hadith* tells us that some of the companions who did not have a complete knowledge of *tawhid* asked the Prophet ﷺ to permit them to hang their swords on a tree so that their swords would be blessed by it, like the disbelievers did with their swords.

The Prophet ﷺ did not say that they had disbelieved and he did not tell them that they had to formally renew their faith in Islam or had to renew their marriage contracts. Rather he warned them that what they asked him to do was like what the Israelites asked Moses do to. He excused them because of ignorance and told them that their request was clearly disbelief. He said that their words were disbelief, but he did not say that they were disbelievers.

Because of this the scholars said that a Muslim may say a word of disbelief.

They may describe the matter or the act as an act of disbelief, but they do not say that each one who says such a word or does such a deed is by virtue of this outside of Islam.

⁽³⁰⁴⁾ Ibn Abu Asim, *Kitab As-sunnah*, 1/37.

For the one to be outside of Islam because of such a thing should have no acceptable reason to be excused. This is why they say, “Someone who says such and such is a disbeliever” but they do not describe any specific one to be declared to be a disbeliever until his error is proven to him. For a Muslim may say a word of disbelief, but this does not mean that he should be called a disbeliever before the matter of disbelief is clearly explained to him.

Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, did not say that the *khawarij* were disbelievers. When someone asked him, “Are they disbelievers?” he said, “They were fleeing from disbelief.”

When he was asked whether they were hypocrites he said, “The hypocrites remember Allah very little, but these people (*khawarij*) are busy with His remembrance day and night. Rather they are our brothers who have rebelled against us.”⁽³⁰⁵⁾

Imam Ahmad and others among the early scholars used to declare that the *Jahmiya* sect was outside Islam, but they were not calling its individuals disbelievers. Here they used to make a distinction between one who says the word, and the one who call others to say the word.

Imam Ahmad used to pray (call Allah) in favor of the Abbasid Caliph Ma'mun to support him, and used to respect him, even though Caliph Ma'mun shared the views of the Mu'tazilite sect, and used to oblige scholars to adopt them, and used to persecute anyone who disagreed with them.

- **The fifth *hadith*** was related by Abdullah bin Abi Ufa, who said, “When Mu'adh came back from the north, he fell down and prostrated to the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘What is this, Mu'adh?’ He said, ‘I went to Damascus, and found people there prostrating themselves to their bishops and priests, and so I wanted to do the same to you.’ The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, ‘If I were to order anyone to

⁽³⁰⁵⁾ Al-Baihaqi, *Sunnan*, 8/173.

prostrate themselves to anyone else I would have ordered women to prostrate themselves to their husbands.’⁽³⁰⁶⁾

There is no doubt that prostration to anyone other than Allah is an act of disbelief, but the Prophet ﷺ did not say that Mu’adh had disbelieved. Rather, he excused him due to his ignorance of the fact that prostration to anyone other than Allah, even to a Prophet, is absolutely forbidden.

- **The sixth *hadith*** was related by al-Rubayi’ bint Mu’awidh. She said that her slave girls used to sing saying, “We have a Prophet who knows what tomorrow will bring.” The Prophet ﷺ told her to leave that statement, but to carry on chanting.”⁽³⁰⁷⁾

Of course, the belief that the Prophet ﷺ knew the unseen contradicts the Qur’an, which commanded the Prophet ﷺ to say, “*I do not know the unseen.*” (6:50) To contradict the Qur’an is disbelief, but the Prophet ﷺ excused them because of their ignorance.

- **The seventh *hadith*** was related by Ibn Abbas, who said that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him, “What [great is] Allah’s will and you” The Prophet ﷺ told him, “Do you take me as a partner [equal] with Allah? Say: What Allah alone wills.”⁽³⁰⁸⁾
- These are evidences support ignorance as an excuse. Only those who are quick to condemn others and those who go beyond all reasonable limits will say anything other than this.

People of nonmessage period

AHL AL-FATRAH

⁽³⁰⁶⁾ Ahmad, 4/381.

⁽³⁰⁷⁾ Al-Bukhari, 5147.

⁽³⁰⁸⁾ Ahmad, 1/214; Ibn Maja (2117).

Many people ask one another about those societies who are cut off from the world, living in forests or in the jungle, who have not heard the message of Islam. Will Allah punish them or excuse them? What is the position with respect to those who did not hear the message of the Prophets?

The Prophet ﷺ said, “By He in Whose hand is my soul, no man from this nation, and no Jew, and no Christian who hears about me and does not believe could be anything other than one of the people of Hell.”⁽³⁰⁹⁾

This subject has been frequently dealt with by the scholars, and called “*Ahl al-Fatrah*,” which means “people who lived at a period when there was no Prophethood.” They say that such people will be tested on the Day of Resurrection. Allah will command them to enter the fire. Those who obey Him will be taken to Paradise. These are the ones who would have believed in the Prophets if they had received news of them in the world. Those who refuse to enter the fire will be cast into it. These are the ones who would have denied the Prophets had they received news of them in the world.

Certainly, Allah knows that which did not happen, how would it be, if it happened, just as He knows what the people of Hell will say on the Day of Resurrection:

“And if you could but see when they are made to stand before the Fire and say, ‘Oh, would that we could be returned and not deny the signs of our Lord and be among the believers!’ (6:27)

But Allah shows their lie by saying,

“And if they were returned, they would surely return to what they were forbidden, and they are certainly liars!” (6:28)

“had Allah known of any good in them, He would have made them hear, but if He had made them hear, they would [still] have turned away, refusing.” (8:23)

The scholars also cited evidences from the *Sunnah* to support this point. The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said, “There are four categories of people who will be able to claim an excuse on the Day of Resurrection:

⁽³⁰⁹⁾ Muslim, (153).

1. One who is deaf
2. One who is simple minded [*ahmaq*].
3. One who is old.
4. One who died at times that had known no Prophet
[*fatrah*].

The deaf will say: “O Lord, Islam came while I was unable to hear.”

The simple minded will say, “Islam came while boys were pelting me with camel dung”.

The senile man will say, “Islam came while I could not reason or understand.

Those who died in a state of *fatrah* will say, “Oh Lord, Your Messenger did not come to me.” Then Allah will take covenants from them that they will surely be obedient to Him. He will send them a Messenger who will order them to enter the fire. The Prophet ﷺ said, “By He in Whose Hand is my soul, if they enter it they will find it cool and a place of safety.” In another narration, “Whoever enters it, it will be cool for him and a place of safety, and whoever does not enter he will be dragged into it.”⁽³¹⁰⁾

This does not mean that anyone who merely heard the name of the Prophet ﷺ and did not believe will be taken to Hell. It is possible that a person heard only the lies and accusations of the fanatic enemies of Islam, who fabricate lies against the Prophet ﷺ and insult him. It is meant that he hears enough about Islam and the Messenger that which may convince him inclusively that Muhammad ﷺ is the Prophet.

The Emergence of *Shirk*

Shirk is to associate a partner with Allah in devotion or worship. Such devotion should only be directed to Allah, since this is Allah’s absolute right upon His creation. This associated partner may be a statue, a tree or a shrine, *shirk* is also to call upon prophets or a saint. This devotion of an act of worship to anything

⁽³¹⁰⁾ Ahmad 4/24; Ibn Hibban (1827).

other than Allah is known as greater *shirk* which Allah never accepts therewith any good deed of a person who does this.

Shirk is the greatest sin which a person can commit. It is worse than any other deed you can imagine. It will cause all good deeds to be cast down and its reward is everlasting torment in Hell. Allah will never forgive a person who dies before repenting from *shirk* and returning from it to the worship of Allah alone. Allah has said,

“Allah forgives not that a partner is associated with Him, but He forgives other than that to whom He wills.” (4:48)

“And whoever associates partners with Allah has gone far astray.” (4:116)

Also,

“They have disbelieved those who said, ‘Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary.’ But the Messiah said, ‘O people of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. He who associates others with Allah, Allah has forbidden Heaven for him. And his home is the Fire, and the wrongdoers will have no helpers.’” (5:72)

And He said, addressing His Prophet ﷺ,

“It was 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.’”
(39:65-66)

There are two types of *shirk*, a greater *shirk* and a lesser *shirk*. One form of greater *shirk* is to take intercessors from among the dead, to call upon them to supply some need, thinking that they are taking them as mediators while in fact they are taking them as gods.

Allah said,

“Or did they take intercessors apart from Allah? Say, ‘Even though they do not possess [power over] anything, nor do they reason?’”

Say, 'To Allah belongs all intercession. To Him belong the heavens and the earth. Then unto Him you shall return.' (39:43-44)

Throughout history people often have revered their righteous ancestors, heroes, reformers, saints (according to the Christian term) or *awlia* (the Muslim term), raising them up to the status of demi-gods.

Indeed, the first kind of *shirk* was in the sanctification of the graves. It was the first deviation from the straight path when the people of Noah made the graves of their righteous people into places of worship, and when they built upon these statues of the dead, which in time they came to worship.

This is the same *shirk* that the Arabs used to practice in Makkah before Islam. They would call upon the righteous dead, make images of them and ask these images to intercede with Allah on their behalf, and to draw them nearer to Allah, in spite of their knowledge that these were created beings that could not provide them with anything. They knew that Allah alone was the Creator and the Sustainer of everything. As Allah has said, ***“If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth they will surely say, [it is] Allah.”*** (39:36)

Allah denounced them for placing a created thing between themselves and Him, making this thing a kind of midway messenger between them, as with a king who does not know what people need of him or who is difficult to be reached except through secretaries and mediators.

“Those whom you invoke apart from Allah are servants like you; so call them and let them respond to you, if you are truthful.” (7:194)

Varieties of *Shirk*

The scholars have classified *shirk* into different categories.

Some of these are:

Shirk al-ruboobiyah.

Shirk al-Uloohiya.

Shirk al-asmaa wassiffat.

- **The first of these, *shirk al-rububiya***, means ascribing to one some divine qualities that are supposed to Allah alone, likewise prohibiting what Allah allowed, or allowing what He prohibited. Allah said,

“Or do they have partners [other deities] who have allowed (matters in) religion that Allah did not allow?” (42:21)

And also,

“And He shares not His legislation with anyone.” (18:26)

This was the trap into which the Jews and the Christians had fallen. Allah says about them, ***“They have taken their scholars and their monks as lords apart from Allah”*** (9:31).

What Allah meant by taking them as lords is being obedient to them rather than following what Allah ordained them. Allowed their rabbis and monks to make for them lawful what is unlawful by Allah, to forbid them from what Allah permitted.

For not only the creation belongs to Allah, but the command as well, just as He said,

“His is the creation and the command.” (7:54)

Who ever allows that which Allah made forbidden - or vice-versa - has already asserted that his is the command with Allah!

- **The second kind of *shirk***, is ***shirk al-uluhiya***. This is to direct some act of worship or devotion to someone other than Allah. To address a prayer to someone else, or to supplicate someone else, or to sacrifice an animal to someone else. Allah points out the futility of this saying,

“Say, “Call upon those you claimed [as gods] besides Him. They have nothing to save you from your trouble or to change it.” (17:56)

And,

***“Oh people, an example is given so listen to it.
Those you invoke apart from Allah will never
create a fly even if they gathered together for
[doing] it; and even if a fly should steal a [tiny]
thing from them they could not recover it from it.
Weak are [both] the seeker and the sought!”
(22:73)***

- **The third kind of *shirk* is *shirk al asmaa wa-siffat*.**
This is to ascribe any of Allah’s divine attributes to any created being, making this being to be like Allah in any way. Allah said that on the Day of Resurrection, the people who did this will say to those who have been treated as God,

***“By Allah, we were indeed in manifest error.
When we equated you with the Lord of the
Worlds.” (26:97-102)***

They will be saying that while sorrow and sadness fill their hearts.

- **One of the types of *shirk*:** is the hidden *shirk*, the clear *shirk*, and the *shirk* of deeds and words. Because of this, scholars have divided *shirk* into greater *shirk* and lesser *shirk*.

Greater *shirk* takes a person completely outside Islam. An example of this is to call upon the dead alongside Allah, in prayer or supplication, or to offer a sacrifice to the dead. This is a corruption of belief.

- **One of the types of *shirk*** is to supplicate to others besides Allah. One may address some supplication to the dead, in order that the dead should fulfill some need, relieve someone of some misfortune or protect someone from disease. No one has the power to do such things except Allah alone. Allah said,

***“Those whom you invoke apart from Allah are
servants like you; so call them and let them
respond to you, if you are truthful.” (7:194)***

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Supplication is worship”⁽³¹¹⁾ and then he recited “*Call upon Me, I will answer you.*” (40:60)

The Prophet ﷺ commanded us to supplicate only to Allah saying, “I call [you] to Allah alone. Who, whenever you are seized by misfortune He relieves you from it.”⁽³¹²⁾

- **One of the types of *shirk*** is to seek the protection of someone other than Allah,

“*And if there comes a whisper [evil suggestion] from Satan to you, then seek refuge in Allah, for He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.*” (41:36)

And He said,

“*And there were men among mankind who used to seek refuge with men among the jinn, but they increased them in burden.*” (72:6)

This is a confession that the jinn used to frighten the people more when they sought refuge in them. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever lands in a place, and then says, “I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created”, nothing will harm him until he marches out from that place.”(Muslim 2708)

Another act of greater *shirk* is to seek the blessing of inanimate beings, such as trees or stones, touching them, or to hang charms on walls, or seeking blessings by rubbing oneself with the dust of graves.

The disbelievers among the Arabs used to hang their swords upon a tree, thinking that they would be blessed. Some of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ asked him to have for them a blessing tree like the one the disbelievers had. Then he said to them, “You have just said something similar to what the Israelites had asked Moses to do when they said, “Make us a god like their god.”⁽³¹³⁾

⁽³¹¹⁾ Abu Daud, (1479).

⁽³¹²⁾ Al-Albani, *Sahih al-jami'a* (243).

⁽³¹³⁾ Tirmidhi, 9/2; Ahmad, 5/218.

Note here that the Prophet ﷺ made these two statements equal: “Make for us a tree”, and “Make for us a god”. Despite this, they did not believe that the tree was god.

And among the views of the great shirk is the building of places of worship at the site of graves, and calling upon the dead. Ali bin Abi Talib said to Abul-Hayaj al-Asadi, “Should not I send you on the same mission that Allah’s Messenger had sent me? That you leave no image (statue) but you obliterate it, nor a grave that is built high but you level it down (with the level of the ground).”⁽³¹⁴⁾

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the Jews and the Christians who used to make the graves of their Prophets and righteous men as places of worship saying, “Whenever a righteous one among them died, they used to build a mosque on his grave, and then they made images of him. These are the most evil ones among people to Allah on the Day of Resurrection.”⁽³¹⁵⁾

And among the views of great shirk is slaughtering and sacrificing animals to someone beside Allah. This is a very monstrous prevalent *shirk*.

Allah says,

“Say, ‘My prayer, my rites [of sacrifice], my living and my dying are for Allah the Lord of the Worlds Who has no partner. This I have been commanded, and I am the first to submission [to the command of Allah].’” (6:162-163)

And He said, **“they fulfill (their) vows”** (76:7). Meaning that when they vow they fulfill it, because it becomes Allah’s right upon them. What is the right of one should not be diverted to another.

And among the views of great shirk is to place the authority of another above that of Allah in matters of law and government, ruling without regard to the *Sharia* (Allah’s law), and publicly permitting what Allah has forbidden and prohibiting what Allah has allowed.

⁽³¹⁴⁾ Muslim, (969); Abu Daud, (3218).

⁽³¹⁵⁾ Bukhari, 3/200.

Allah is the Master of the heavens and the earth and all that they contain. This includes the angels, the jinn, and the human beings. Likewise, it is Allah's exclusive right to determine the limits which He will impose upon His creatures.

Therefore, one who turns his back on the Sharia, which Allah has revealed, and prefers to rule according to man-made law that men have devised for themselves, is guilty of *shirk*, even if he believes that Allah alone created the heavens and the earth. This is because Allah owns the creation, so He owns the decision. All right of governance belongs to Him alone.

Creator and Ruler

It is true that Allah said,

“To Him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth.” (5:40)

But He also said,

“To Him belongs rule and unto Him you shall return.” (28:70)

“His is the creation and the command.” (7:54)

Thus, Allah describes the Israelites saying,

“They have taken their scholars and their monks as lords apart from Allah.” (9:31)

They did this when they obeyed their rabbis in forbidding what Allah had permitted, and permitting what Allah had forbidden them to do, and so Allah said that they had taken Lords other than Allah. Allah also said,

“Or have they partners [other than Allah] who made lawful for them (matters) in religion that which has not allowed?” (42:21)

And He said,

“He who judges not by what Allah has sent down, those are surely the unbelievers.” (5:44)

And among the views of greater or major *shirk*, are slaughtering animals and offering sacrifices to others besides Allah.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah’s curse is on him, who slaughters for the sake of any thing other than Allah”⁽³¹⁶⁾

Another form of greater *shirk* is fearing someone other than Allah as one should fear Allah, or even being in greater dread of him than one is in dread of Allah. Allah said,

“Do you fear them? But Allah has more right that you should fear Him if you are [truly] believers.”

(9:13)

And He said,

“So fear them not, but fear Me if you are [truly] believers.” (3:175)

And He said,

“But when fighting was prescribed for them, there is a party of them fearing the people as they would fear Allah, or even with a greater fear.” (4:77)

Another form of greater *shirk* is placing one’s hope for success in someone other than Allah. Rather, the servant’s heart must cling to its Creator, in fear and hope, in His favor and in His mercy.

One should abandon all hope of ever benefiting from anything other than Allah. Allah has forbidden the believers from displaying their weakness before their enemies saying,

“Do not weaken in pursuit of the enemy. If you are suffering, they are too suffering as you are suffering, but you hope from Allah what they hope not . And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.” (4:104)

lesser *shirk*

Lesser *shirk* is to seek someone else’s attention together with that of Allah in performing an act of worship or devotion, such as showing off one’s piety to others. This is known in Arabic as *ria’a*, ‘letting oneself be seen’ or ‘seeking the attention of others’.

⁽³¹⁶⁾ Muslim, (1567).

The Prophet ﷺ described one type of lesser *shirk* saying that it was “To pay careful attention to his prayer when he realizes that another person is watching him.” That is to pretend piety and righteousness before people’s eyes, hoping to win their hearts by an act that looks righteous. Allah said as reported by His Prophet ﷺ, “I am the richest One among those taken as partners. Whoever makes a certain deed in which he associates anyone with Me (i.e. doing the worship for My sake and for the sake of others), I will leave him with his *shirk* (i.e. the partnership that he took with Me)”.⁽³¹⁷⁾

This refers to *riya’a*. When someone mixes up another in some righteous act, he cuts himself short of his reward, according to how much he has sought the approval of others in doing it. That is assuming that his intention was originally to devote his act entirely to Allah, but then a desire to be seen by others entered his heart. If, on the other hand, his original intention was only to please others, or to please people and not to please Allah, then his act of righteousness will be rejected entirely.

This is called ‘concealed *shirk*.’ We must not underestimate the seriousness of this kind of *shirk* since the Prophet ﷺ was more fearful of the harm this would do to his nation than he was fearful of the *Dajjal* (the Anti-Christ). Abu Sa’id al-Khudri said, “The Prophet ﷺ came to us while we were discussing the *Massih al-Dajjal*. He said, ‘Do you know what I fear more for you than the *Massih al-Dajjal*?’ We said, ‘No, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said, ‘Concealed *shirk*: that a man stands in prayer and prays as well as he can when he knows that another person is watching him.’”⁽³¹⁸⁾

It means that he recognizes the watching of the other person to him, not noticing at the same time the sight of Allah. So minor concealed *shirk* (*shirk al-khafi*) is one of the steps of Satan that lead to the major clear *shirk* (*shirk al-jali*).

How to avoid showing off

Many would like to know how to avoid this concealed *shirk*.

⁽³¹⁷⁾ Muslim, (2985); Ibn Maja, (3387).

⁽³¹⁸⁾ Ibn Maja.

The answer is:

One must reestablish a deeper relationship with Allah.

One must obstinate one's self from what people's hand posses, *riya'a* happens only when this life becomes in one's sight greater than the next one to come.

One must consider Allah's greatness, His richness is greater than any other greatness or richness, He is the King of kings, the Richest of those rich ones.

One also should remember that nothing comes to you from people but it is from Allah Almighty, and that it was written before you were created, and what Allah decides to give none could ever withhold, and what He withhold there's none to give. Allah says,

“Whatever mercy Allah grants to people, none can withhold it. And whatever He withholds, none can release thereafter, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”
(35:2)

■ To consider His greatness and richness, and to be one of those who magnify Him, is to worship Him. Worshipping Allah increases faith in one's heart, the greater faith will fruit more fearing of Allah and more magnificence in heart till it becomes careless towards people, careful towards Allah.

Unless the heart tastes the greatness of Allah over any other greatness, and unless the Hereafter becomes greater in our heart than the present one, we will remain having this problem of show off (*riya,a.*)

Another form of lesser *shirk* is to believe in astrologers and fortune-tellers and soothsayers, and to believe that they have any knowledge of the unseen. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever goes to a seer or a fortune-teller and believes what he says has disbelieved in what was revealed unto Muhammad.”⁽³¹⁹⁾ Similarly, believing that what happens to us is determined by the movement of the stars or the planets, or the movement of the planets through the constellations of the zodiac is lesser *shirk*.

⁽³¹⁹⁾ Ahmad, 2429.

A person who was born under the sign of Aquarius accepts what he reads in the newspaper every day about what he should do on that day. If it says, he will have a surprise today, he believes it and waits patiently for his surprise, and if it says he will have a traffic accident, he stays at home thinking that this way he can avoid having an accident. And if it tells him that he will come upon a large sum of money, he goes out and spends whatever he has and waits for his windfall to come. This is lesser *shirk*. How could the stars determine that anything should happen that Allah has not decreed should happen even before they were created?

Another kind of lesser *shirk* is to swear by someone other than Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Who swears an oath by another than Allah, has disbelieved or associated another with Allah.”⁽³²⁰⁾

And among the lesser *shirk* is what people say without thinking, bring unaware that the words they utter draw into error. They will call on others besides Allah, like the man who told the Prophet ﷺ “What Allah wills (*ma sha-Allah*), and what you will.”

The Prophet ﷺ told him “Are you making me equal with Allah? Rather you should say, ‘What Allah alone wills. Or “What Allah will, and then what Muhammad wills’.”⁽³²¹⁾

And among the lesser *shirk* is what Ibn Abbas said: “People fall in *shirk* by saying, ‘If it were not for the dogs [to guard], then thieves would have robbed us.’”⁽³²²⁾

It is as if they forget that Allah is the one who did not will that thieves should come. And that if He had willed for thieves to come, they would have been able to get rid of the dogs.

Thus, the reasons for something happening are not independent of the One who makes all things happen, and that is Allah.

⁽³²⁰⁾ Tirmidhi, 18/7; Ahmad 3/34.

⁽³²¹⁾ Ahmad, 1/214; al-Bukhari, (783)

⁽³²²⁾ Tafseer Al-Qur’an Al-Adheem. Ibn Katheer 1/57. Authentic

MAGIC

Magic is a kind of *shirk* which is impossible to perform except with the assistance of devils and without first drawing near to them by doing things that anger Allah.

Magic depends upon spells and incantations and occult practices which affect both the heart and the body, bring disease and death, and separate a man from his wife, as Allah said:

“And [yet] they learn from them that by which they separate a man from his wife.” (2:102)

Of course, magic has no power over those against whom it is directed except by the will of Allah. Allah reminds us of this saying,

“But they [can] harm no one except by permission of Allah.” (2:103)

Allah may permit a lewd or a disobedient person, heedless of Allah’s remembrance, and turning away from His religion, to be punished by magic. He has disarmed himself by his lewdness, heedlessness, and disobedience, such things made him subject to the harm, and the playing of the devils.

For the only safeguard or fortress to protect oneself from the designs of devils and their magic is to hold fast to Allah and to obey Him and to call Him frequently to mind. Mankind has no other arm of protection except this.

In fact a person may be stricken with magic or jealousy in order to test the extent of his patience. For by this test, one can achieve one of two rewards: either Allah will raise him up in status and increase his good deeds, or He will wipe away his sins.

Magic also includes things like the “laying on of hands” and the holding of “seances” and other occult practices.

Kinds of Magic

The first kind of magic depends upon deceiving the eyes or another of the senses. Allah said about the magicians of Pharaoh,

“And when they threw [their staff] they bewitched the eyes of the people and struck terror into them, and they brought a great [feat of] magic.”(7:116)

When they cast their staffs before Moses:

“It seemed to them, by their magic, that their ropes and staffs are [snakes that are] slithering.” (20:66)

That is to say that it appeared to Moses that these were living slithering snakes.

The other kind of magic is not merely an illusion, but is real, and Allah has commanded us to seek His protection from those who practice it saying,

“Say, ‘I seek refuge in the Lord of Daybreak, from the evil of that which He created, and from the evil of darkness when it settles, and from the evil of [female sorcerers] the blowers in knots, and from the evil of an envier when he envies.’” (113:1-5)

The ‘women who blow on knots’ are sorcerers working black magic against others. If this were not real, then Allah would not have commanded us to seek refuge in Him from it.

Even our Prophet ﷺ was subject to a Jewish sorcerer’s magic.

This was a man named Labid bin al-A’sam. The Prophet ﷺ began to imagine that he was having intercourse with his wives while he does not. Until two angels came to him to tell him what had

happened to him. Zaid b. al-Arqam said, “The Prophet ﷺ was bewitched by a Jew. He suffered from this for several days and then the Angel Gabriel came to him to say that a Jew had bewitched him.”⁽³²³⁾ After that, Allah revealed the chapters (112 & 113 & 114) for the fortification against the harm of the devils.

The scholar Nawawi said, “Some of the people of innovation have denied that this event occurred, claiming that it is not possible to bewitch a Prophet, and this is an offence against the status of Prophethood, and shakes confidence in the Law.

⁽³²³⁾ Al-Bukhari, (5766); Nisa’i, 7/112.

What these innovators claim is pure falsehood. Because of the innumerable proofs of his truthfulness, and infallibility and protection with regard to the issue of conveying what had been revealed to him, and the miracle [of the Qur'an] stands as a witness to this.”

Imam al-Nawawi goes on to say that this illusion “was a matter of deception of the eyes only, and not a defect that occurred in the Prophet’s mind, and there is no evidence here that it was a kind of thing that could have affected his conveying the Message”.

“The illusion that the Prophet ﷺ experienced was similar to the illusion that Moses experienced, when he saw the sorcerers throw down their ropes and their staffs and these appeared to be snakes slithering about. Moses imagined something that did not really happen. This is precisely what happened to the Prophet ﷺ when he imagined that he had lain with some of his wives, while he had not in fact done so.”⁽³²⁴⁾

The verdict (*fatwa*) about magic

Imams: Malik, Ahmad, and Abu Hanifa have ruled that a person who practices magic is a disbeliever. They cite the Qur'an to support this verdict:

“It was not Solomon who disbelieved, but the devils did, teaching mankind magic.” (2:102) And:

“But they [the two angels] do not teach anyone unless they say, ‘We’re a trial, so do not disbelieve.’” (2:102)

This means that they knew that sorcery was disbelief. Omar bin al-Khattab used to send letters to his governors of the Muslim countries saying “Kill every magician male and female”.

⁽³²⁴⁾ Nawawi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, 7/112.

Fortune-Tellers and Soothsayers

A fortune-teller is one who predicts the future. Sometimes he is right and sometimes he is wrong. He claims to have knowledge of the unseen and knowledge of what the future holds. In fact, he calls upon the jinn to bring him knowledge of things that only

Allah knows. Allah said,

“[He is] ***Knower of the Unseen, and He does not disclose His [knowledge of the] Unseen to anyone.***” (72:26)

This alleged knowledge of the unseen that the fortune-teller claims through astrology, or by casting stones or watching the flights of birds is something that he receives from jinn who tell him about the things that they see but he does not. Such things are hidden to the eyes of mankind but are not hidden from the eyes of jinn, who may come and go in the twinkling of an eye. This should not be called knowledge, but rather proportional knowledge. Just as we can have these days the news about the West through a phone call or by watching a T.V channel, and this knowledge is seen to the watcher but unseen to those who did not watch it.

But Allah has the absolute knowledge. He said,

“***Say, ‘none in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah.’***” (27:65)

Even the prophets did not know the unseen, and prophets were the most beloved of all creation to Allah. Allah commanded Noah

ﷻ to say,

“***I do not have knowledge of the unseen***” (11:31), and He commanded Muhammad to say,

“***And if I have knew the unseen, I would have then gained much benefit from it and evil would not have touched me.***” (7:188)

How then could those who are even less than those who could never be compared to them have acquired such knowledge?

And why is it that those who claim to know what will be, are surprised by death, as anyone else?

As for the jinn who inform them, Allah exposed their ignorance of the unseen when Solomon died. He remained leaning on his staff, and the jinn kept going and coming, passing by Solomon,

being totally unaware that he had died. And when the worms had eaten through his staff he fell to the earth, only then did the jinn realize that he was dead. Allah said,

“And when We decreed death for him, nothing indicated to them [i.e, the jinn] his death except a creature of the earth eating his staff. But when he fell down, it became clear to the jinn that if they had known the Unseen, they would not have remained in humiliating punishment.” (34:14)

The devils come down on fortune-tellers. Allah said,
“Shall I tell you upon whom the devils descend? They descend upon every sinful liar. They pass on what is heard, and most of them are liars.”
(26:221)

The Prophet ﷺ was once asked about fortune-tellers, and he said, “They are nothing.(i.e., liars)” Someone said, “O Messenger of Allah, sometimes they tell us something which comes out true.”

He said, “That word which comes to be truth is what the jinn snatches and throws into the ear of his follower who mixes it up with a hundred lies.”⁽³²⁵⁾

And behind this stealing of information, the fortune-tellers exploit the ignorant for their own purposes. They claim that they have been honored by Allah and that He has given them knowledge of His secrets and granted them knowledge of the Unseen.

A ruling on the use of charms

Fortune-tellers give people various kinds of talismans, charms, and amulets to wear around their necks. These are sometimes called *hijab Al-hisn Al-haseen* (the protective fortress). They contain words from the Qur’an mixed with words that are not clear; there may be numbers and incantations taught to them by devils. The fortune-tellers claim that these things can cure people’s ills and protect them from any harm. To protect themselves from exposure, the fortune-tellers tell people to wear these charms, but

⁽³²⁵⁾ Al-Bukhari (6213); Muslim (2228).

warn them gravely against ever opening them, and say that if they do, some disaster will befall them. In this way they cause them confusion in their religion and waste their money, and they may even rape their women, and corrupt their lives. They draw them into disputes with their closest relations and friends and lead them to sever the ties of kinship. When someone comes to them they will say, “The closest of people to you has bewitched you, your mother or your sister or your wife.” This is the extent to which Satan’s minions will go to do harm. Allah said, “**And [yet] they learn from them that by which they separate a man from his wife.**” (2:102)

The *shariah* came to save people from this corruption and protect people from it. It forbids the use of talismans and charms and the things that are called *hijab. u’kba bin amer* said that the

Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever hangs up a charm has associated something with Allah.”⁽³²⁶⁾

The ruling on the visitor of fortune-tellers

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah said, “Whoever goes to a soothsayer or fortune-teller and believes him has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad”⁽³²⁷⁾ and in another narration he said, “His prayer will not be accepted for forty days.”⁽³²⁸⁾

The ruling on fortune-tellers

If this is the ruling for going to a fortune-teller, then surely the soothsayer or fortune-teller himself is more deserving of being declared a disbeliever than is his client. Both have made themselves servants of the devil, who has every means of using these people to deceive and mislead people into *bid’a* (innovation) and *shirk* (polytheism) and disbelief. These people and sorcerers are more deserving of being called missionaries of Satan than are the people who go to them for help.

⁽³²⁶⁾ Ahmad, 4/156; al-Hakim, 4/219.

⁽³²⁷⁾ Ahmad, 2/149; al-Hakim, 1/8.

⁽³²⁸⁾ Muslim, 2230.

How to expose a fortune-teller

An easy way to expose these people is to detect their conducts and compare their words and deeds to what we know is right from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Every fortune-teller has with him innumerable lies and violations of the *shariah* that makes it easy to be exposed. The more people become ignorant, the more fortune-tellers become able to fool them, and find that their opportunities are ripe. The best way to guard against them is to teach people about their religion and raise their level of awareness.

Astrology is a branch of magic

Astrology involves claiming that the movements of planets and stars in the heavens affect events on earth, and knowing through them about the events of the future.

With the emergence of every year, fortune-tellers come up with every kind of predictions, visions and prophecies, and in the end, their lies are always evident. All kinds of things are supposed to happen because of the stars and the planets.

Geminis await a happy event, and Virgos are anxious about some misfortune that will befall them. Astrologers claim that they have news of these things from the stars. Of course they could never have any such information from any star and their claims are nothing but lies. What they know they have discovered by means of magic and commerce with the jinn. It is a fact that astrologers receive the assistance of jinns and that they believe that the stars

are truly living beings. Because of this, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever grasps at stars has grasped at magic."⁽³²⁹⁾

⁽³²⁹⁾ Abu Daud, (3905).

The Prophet ﷺ narrated that Allah Almighty said, “Some of My servants had become believers and others became disbelievers.

Those who say, ‘We have had a rainfall by Allah’s favor and Mercy,’ have believed in Me and disbelieved in the stars. And those who say, ‘we have had a rainfall by such and such (star)’ have disbelieved in Me and believed in the stars.”⁽³³⁰⁾

The Prophet ﷺ warned us against astrologers and against believing in them saying, “My greatest fears for my nation are three: Oppressive rulers, denial of *qadar* (predestination), and belief in the stars.”⁽³³¹⁾

Of course Allah has created the stars and the planets for a purpose and according to a plan other than what the astrologers claim, saying that the acts of people, their destiny, and their provision on earth are related to the motions of the stars and planets through the heavens.

Qatada, may Allah have mercy on him, pointed out the reason for the existence of the stars and the planets when he said, “Allah created the stars for three reasons:
They beautify the heavens.
With them devils are pelted.

By them we find sign posts to help us on our way.” Allah said, “***And it is He who created the stars by which you may find your way through the darkness of land and sea.***” (6:97)

“Whoever says that they were created for some other purpose has given his own claim, and made it wrong, and lost the truth, and gone too far, and exceeded the limit by uttering what he has no knowledge about. For by Allah, Allah has not put in the stars any knowledge about anyone’s life, nor to provide for them, nor to bring death. They invent a lie against Allah and with the stars they pretend to have knowledge.”⁽³³²⁾

⁽³³⁰⁾ Al-Bukhari(7503) Muslim (71) This type of narration known as HadithQudsi

⁽³³¹⁾ Al-Manawi, *al-Faid*, 1/204.

⁽³³²⁾ Al-Bukhari.

The human soul has a natural longing for knowledge of what the future holds, for news of riches and success. We long for knowledge of what will become of us, to know of impending misfortune, evil or death. This longing comes from ignorance of what we are bound to believe as Muslims: knowledge of the unseen is the exclusive right of Allah alone and no one else.

Charlatans exploit popular ignorance. The more ignorant people are, the more common it is to find fortune-tellers and soothsayers and magicians among them. This is why they are more common in villages than they are in towns and cities.

It is not difficult to find people who read palms or tea leaves in any small village. Nevertheless, it is forbidden for any Muslim who has the fear of Allah in his heart to go to any of these people. Seeing them could have the gravest consequences for one's faith. Likewise, it is obligatory for him to warn those he knows who see fortune-tellers.

The task that Satan gives these people is to cast doubt into their hearts and corrupt their beliefs.

what is the alternative

People sometimes say, "We know that these people are liars, but what is the alternative?" The alternative is to keep up the reading of the Qur'an and to regularly recite the remembrance of Allah. This is the true remedy to the perversions of the occult and a mighty weapon against Satan and his helpers.

As for those who take devils as friends, listening to their suggestions, applying what they reveal to them, following them in the defiance of Allah—who do not pray or fast and who busy themselves with every perversion—these should not ask anyone for an alternative. It was their disobedience that disarmed them.

Therefore, they have no more protection from Allah, and no more immunity or prevention from evil. Whenever the devils harm them, they rush upon sorcerers and fortune-tellers to find a cure, but the medicine they give them drowns them with more diseases.

These people are the first victims of devils and the first visitors to their agents the sorcerers and fortune-tellers.

Do people think that they will be left alone to sin without paying the tax of their sins? Every sin keeps its negative impact in the heart, and allows devils more prevailing power against their humankind followers.

But the believer who relies entirely upon Allah is different from this. It is the devils who fear him, and avoid him. Allah said,

“So when you recite the Qur’an, seek [first] refuge in Allah from Satan the expelled [from Allah’s Mercy], He has no authority over those who have believed and rely upon their Lord. But his authority is over those who take him as an ally and those who through him associate others with Him.” (16:98-100)

When you obey devils by day, they will be scaring you by night. If you do not fear Allah, you must fear someone else as a punishment. But when you fear Allah, Allah will let the others fear you.

The Muslim must believe sincerely in the words of Allah:
“Surely the plot of Satan is weak.” (4:76)

But this weakness is because of the light and faith with which Allah favors the believers, and the help He sends them from His Angels. Their hearts are bathed in light and faith, and the Angels of Allah stand guard over them. This is why devils stay away from them, indeed, why they flee from them.

How to protect yourself against Satan

Whoever would like to protect himself against Satan must take the following precautions:

Abandon all blameworthy acts and quickly turn to repentance before Allah.

Avoid all innovation in religion and repent from it and draw near to Allah in the ways He has prescribed in His Law, not by the ways of innovation.

Keep your obligations which Allah has laid upon you, to pray and to fast and to pay *zakat* and to perform the pilgrimage.

Get into the habit of remembering Allah often and learn the remembrances which the Prophet ﷺ taught us to recite in the morning and in the evening, when entering your house, and when entering the toilet and when leaving it.

Learn the remembrances to recite before you go to sleep and when you wake up. Get into the habit of reading *Surat al-Fatiha*, and the two Suras, (*Qul awdhu bi rab al-falaq* No.113), and (*Qul awdhu bi rab al-nas* No.114), as well as the Verse of the throne (*al-Kursi* 2:255) every day at sunrise and sunset and after every prayer. Satan had confessed that this verse weakens him.

Pray the *Sunnah* (voluntary) prayers and the extra prayers at home and not in the mosque, because a house in which no one prays becomes like an abandoned graveyard.

Read *Surat al-Baqara* in your house at least once every month. Devils flee from the house in which *Surat al-Baqara* is read.

Respect the Angels whom Allah made to be protectors over us and who stand guard over us against devils. For the Angels do not stay in a place where people disobey Allah, and if a place is free of Angels, then devils will fill it and find their opportunity to strike.

Show patience and perseverance and trust in Allah. Hold fast to faith and know that if all mankind and all the jinn gathered to benefit a servant in something, they could give nothing except the thing that Allah had already decreed for him, and if they all gathered to do him harm, they could not do anything to harm him except what Allah had already decreed for him. What befell us was not able to miss us. And what missed us was not able to befall us.

Doubts and response to them

The first doubt:

Question: One may say: I have supplicated to Allah to turn away my illness, but nothing happened, while others went to a fortune-teller and they were cured.

Answer: It sounds as if this person places more hope in the fortune-tellers to help him than he does in Allah, and as if he believes that the fortune-teller will be quicker to respond to his need than Allah. Isn't this just what the Devils hope him to believe? They hope to see him despairing with Allah, giving up his supplications to Him, while placing his confidence in fortune-tellers and soothsayers instead.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The invocation of anyone among you is fulfilled as long as he does not become impatient." The Prophet ﷺ was asked, "How does he do this? He said, "He says, 'I invoked My Lord and He did not reply to me.' So he regrets and becomes sorry, then he abandons invoking."⁽³³³⁾

He does not just abandon supplication, but rather he seeks something that Allah has forbidden and seeks recourse in fortune-tellers and soothsayers. Perhaps his illness was a test from Allah to reveal whether he was solidly obedient or not, or whether his faith would be weakened. And so his patience failed him and he went to a soothsayer knowing that this was forbidden.

⁽³³³⁾ Al-Bukhari, (6340); Muslim, (2735).

Who knows? Perhaps if he had been patient, this may have been the thing that earned him Paradise. Once a woman came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “I am epileptic ... so supplicate to Allah for me.” He said, “If you like you may be patient and Paradise will be yours, and if you like I will supplicate to Allah to cure you.” She said, “But I will be patient.” That is why whenever Ibn Abbas used to see this woman he said to those with him, “Shall I show you one of the women of Paradise?” And the person replied, “Yes”. Ibn Abbaas said, “Here is that black woman there”⁽³³⁴⁾.

People today are no longer as patient as this woman. They go running to sorcerers and magicians to cure them. Did Paradise become so cheap to them? Can the suffering in this life be compared with the fire of the Hereafter?

It could be that Allah would grant a person much good because of his having been patient in illness. Perhaps his sins would have been forgiven and he would not be punished in the next world. Perhaps he would have left the world free of sin.

Suppose that this disease is incurable or difficult to cure, but there are chronic conditions which are difficult to treat, and there are diseases such as AIDS and some forms of cancer for which we know no cure unless Allah wills someone to be delivered from them.

There are people who are faced with great difficulties and dangers, who go out leaving their families behind and fight and die in the path of Allah.

What is the matter with some people who prefer to fall into disbelief and who commit major sins rather than be patient, when patience itself may be an expiation for them from their sins?

The second doubt: the person says that someone else went to soothsayer or a fortune-teller and was cured at his hands.

Answer: This cure could have been a deception of the devil, to convince him to believe in the power of the fortune-teller. It may

⁽³³⁴⁾ Bukhari Hadith number (5652).

be that going to a fortune-teller had nothing to do with his being cured, but that it was merely a coincidence that just as he went to see him, he got well.

Perhaps Allah cured him to bring him gradually to his punishment for going to the fortune-tellers, because going to these people is a greater disease in his faith and religion, and it exposes him to spiritual diseases of the soul or heart which are much more dangerous than physical diseases of the heart or the body.

Should being cured make it reasonable or allowed for one to come constantly to the fortune-tellers and sorcerers?
Is experiment really a good way for us to discover what is permitted and what is prohibited?

If we say that scientific evidence proves that alcohol has some medicinal uses, would we then be permitted to use it for medicinal purposes even after the Prophet ﷺ had told us that “Allah has not made your remedy by that which He forbids you.”⁽³³⁵⁾

Or, should we rather have confidence that what Allah has forbidden remains forbidden, even though it may appear otherwise to some.

Not every thing beneficial should be permitted necessarily. Jihad, for the sake of Allah, may sacrifice many of Allah’s bounties in the world, but in exchange for a great reward in Paradise.

⁽³³⁵⁾ Bukhari. Hadith no. (5614).

The Flights of Birds (*tiarah*)

Tiarah means to see evil omen in things (pessimists), numbers or animals, the flights of birds, and by other things. This word was derived from the word *tair* (bird). When the people of *Jahilia* (ignorance) intended to travel or to do any other thing, they used to watch the bird that stood over their houses. If it flew to the right, they became optimistic, and they did the thing they intended, but if it flew to the left they became pessimistic, and then they did not travel.

Islam abolished such superstitious beliefs which were widespread in ancient times, and emphasized strongly that these things have no effect on events in the world; they bring no benefit and they bring no evil.

Belief in superstitions and omens is forbidden by the Sharia. To believe in these things is *shirk*, lesser *shirk* that contradicts the perfect belief of *tawhid*. This is because:

A person may think that the omen may bring benefit or repel some evil.

A person may act upon an omen depending upon this rather than upon Allah.

Dependence upon omens binds the heart to something other than Allah.

It brings forth in the heart of Allah's servant concerns and fear. Belief in omens is a pathway to greater *shirk*, which Satan sows among men to slowly estrange people from their faith and entangle them in disbelief.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Omens are *shirk*, omens are *shirk*." Ibn Mas'ud said, "None of us but he is that one, but Allah drives it away by *tawakul* (putting one's trust in Allah)".⁽³³⁶⁾ He meant that this omen occurs in one's soul, but the dependence on Allah demolishes it.

⁽³³⁶⁾ Abu Daud, (3910); Tirmidhi, (1614).

Even though, the people of the West lead materialistic lives, many among them are drowning in a sea of obsession and fancy. Fear surrounds them from every quarter. They excite themselves more with films of horror and suspense.

It is not surprising then that we should see people in the West, despite their material prosperity, believing in all kinds of strange superstitions. They avoid the numbers 13, and 666; Wednesday is a bad day; crows are portents of death; and they may believe that if a crow or an owl flies over their house then some calamity is about to happen.

Charms

People hang charms around their necks or in a vehicle or over a door or anywhere. They think they will be useful to drive away some evil, protect them from the evil eye or some other misfortune. They may even hang a horseshoe over their doorway. What good do you expect from those who forget to seek refuge in Allah, but forget not to seek refuge in the horseshoe?

Islam has replaced this act of ignorance by reading the Qur'an and reciting remembrances of Allah from the *Sunnah*. Abdullah b. Mas'ud said that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Charms and incantations ... are *shirk*." Abdullah's wife said, "Why do you say that? By Allah, my eye was twitching and I went to such and such a Jew and he read an incantation over it and it stopped." Abdullah said, "That is Satan's handiwork. He was goading your eye to twitch all along, and when the incantation was read, he stopped. It would have been enough for you to recite what the Prophet ﷺ used to say, 'Oh Allah, remove affliction Lord of Mankind, cure me for You are the One Who Cures. There is no curing other than Your cure. A cure keeps no illness.'"⁽³³⁷⁾

⁽³³⁷⁾Abu Daud, (3883); supplications from the *Sunnah*, like the Qur'an, must be recited in Arabic. This one is, "*Allahuma, Adhhib al-ba's rabba n-naas, ishfi wa anta ash-shafi, la shifaa' illa shifaa'uk, shifaa'an la yughaadiru saqman.*"

Ruqyah

A *ruqyah* is kind of supplication or recitation taken from the Qur'an or the *Sunnah* which is read upon someone who is ill. A'w b. Malik said, "We used to read *ruqyah* in the times of the Ignorance, and we asked the Prophet ﷺ. 'What do you say about this?' He said, 'Mention to me your *ruqyah* that do not contain *shirk*.'"⁽³³⁸⁾ "There is nothing wrong with *ruqyah* as far as it does not contain *shirk*."

Once a scorpion stung a man and Jabir b. Abdullah asked the Prophet ﷺ "Shall we read a *rukyah* on him?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever is able to help his brother, then let him help him."⁽³³⁹⁾ To remain within what the Law of Allah permits, a *rukyah* must conform to certain guidelines:

- It should be taken from the words of Allah, and this is the best type of *rukyah*. Allah has said, **"And We send down from the Qur'an that which is healing, cure and a mercy for the believers."** (17:82)
- It should be from the remembrances contained in the *Sunnah*. The meaning of all its words must be clear, and it must not contain numbers or talismans or stars or other cryptic symbols. All these things are forbidden.
- It must not call upon anyone other than Allah, upon *awlia* or the righteous dead, or the jinn, nor call upon them by name.
- No one should rely upon a *rukyah* or set his heart upon it, or believe that it is effective by itself. Or that it cures whatever happens, but it is the will of Allah that allow things to take place, or allows not *rukyah* to take effect, He strikes whomever He wills with disease, and turns it from whomever He wills, just like any other disease. It may be that a *rukiya* contains the words of Allah, but Allah does not will that one should be cured.

⁽³³⁸⁾ Muslim, 2200; Abu Daud, 3886.

⁽³³⁹⁾ Muslim, (2199)/

Seances

Is it possible to call back the spirits from the dead?
Can the spirit of the dead go wherever it pleases, whenever it
pleases?

Can the spirits tell us about what is happening to it now?
Whether it is suffering or rejoicing?

The Qur'an replies to these questions saying,
***“They ask you concerning the Spirit. Say: ‘The Spirit
is of the affair of my Lord. And you have been given
of knowledge except a little.’ (17:85)***

This means that we have no knowledge about the spirit, its
nature and how it moves.

This confirms that what has been observed of the calling up of
the spirits of the dead is in fact a calling up of demons.

The spirit is a part of the world of the unseen about which no
one has any knowledge but Allah.

Allah has told us that when a soul leaves its body it is returned
to Him. As to the righteous soul it will be said to it:

***“O you reassured soul, return to your Lord, well-
pleased and well pleasing to Him. Then enter among
My servants! And enter My Paradise!” (89:27-28)***

The souls of the dead go to the world of *Barzakh*⁽³⁴⁰⁾. Then
after that, either to Paradise or to Hell. Allah has challenged
mankind to return the souls of the dead to their bodies saying,

***“Then why do you not, if you [claim] not to be brought
to account, that you bring it [i.e the soul] back, if you are
truthful?” (56:86-7)***

Whoever claims that he can call up the spirits of the dead has
claimed that he can bring the soul of the dead back.

Allah says that when He brings death and decrees its time, that
He seizes the soul:

⁽³⁴⁰⁾ The period one remains after death till resurrection.

“Allah takes the souls at [the time of] their death, and that which has not died [He takes] during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death, and releases the others for a specified term. In this are signs for a people who reflect.” (39:42)

Once Allah has seized a soul, no impostor and no lying charlatan can ever bring it back. Allah said,
“Say, the Angel of Death will take you [away to death] who is entrusted concerning you, then unto your Lord you will be returned.” (32:11)

And also,
“He sends guardians [angels] over you, until, when death comes to one of you, Our messengers [angels of death] take him, and they do not fail. Then they [people] are returned to Allah, their True Lord [Protector]. Verily To Him belongs the judgement, and He is the Swiftest of accountants.” (6:61)

If people were able to bring back the souls of the dead, why then don't they bring them back at the moment of death? Why can't the raise dead bodies back to life again, or bring them out of their graves?

Islam made an end to this common fiction that drowned people with lots of fears, concerns, terror, insecurity, and phobias, because of the belief that the spirits will have greater power and will encompass the living ones who stay in the house.

Islam stressed that the spirit is under control of its Creator, and it does not return to the body or incarnate another body or talk to the people after its separation with the body.

The way they deceive people

To fool people into believing that he can summon the spirits of the dead to him, a sorcerer depends upon a psychologically tricky

way, using a darkened room, lit by a weak red lamp. He will have some of his friends hiding in the room. These will appear wearing shrouds, and make strange sounds and shrieks.

Others of them will depend upon magic and the help of jinn who will take the name of the dead person whose spirit should be called, by his mother's name. The jinn go and seek a jinn who used to be his *qareen* (companion)⁽³⁴¹⁾ in life before he died, this jinn will come and assume the likeness of the dead person, imitate his voice and reveal everything he knows about him, and since this jinn was always with him, he will know a lot. And so the relatives of the dead person will believe that this thing before them is really their dead relative, and they will never suspect that they have been talking to a jinn.

This deception has had its effect upon the doctrine of many ordinary people and upon some Sufis stressed that the spirit of their sheik or their *wali* comes to them and goes, visiting his relatives and his students, even after death, and continues to teach them morality and wisdom. They even go so far as to call them "men in occultation." They claim that their *sheiks* come out of their graves and help those who call upon them for help, granting assistance to their supplicants and then returning to their graves.

It is clear that calling up the spirits of the dead is nothing but a game and a trick to corrupt the beliefs of the unsuspecting, a way to cheat people of their property and violate their honor, and a means of spreading doctrinal chaos and perversion among the Muslims.

⁽³⁴¹⁾ The jinn who accompanies a person throughout his life.

ALLIANCE AND DISASSOCIATION

Al-Wala'a, (alliance) means to bind oneself to those who obey Allah and believe in Him, to love them and to help them, and to disassociate oneself from the people of *shirk* and *kufr* (disbelief). In addition, it means to hold them in contempt and enmity for their rebellion against Allah, and for their disbelief.

This subject, known in Arabic as *al-wala'a wal-bara*, is one of the most fundamental aspects of belief. The Prophet ﷺ said: “The strongest bond of faith is: Allegiance is (between believers) for the sake of Allah; enmity is (against disbelievers) for the sake of Allah; love is (between believers) for the sake of Allah; and anger is (against disbelievers) for the sake of Allah.”⁽³⁴²⁾ And he said, “He who loves for the sake of Allah, and hates for the sake of Allah, and who gives for the sake of Allah, and who withholds for the sake of Allah, has achieved complete faith.”⁽³⁴³⁾

Islam guides the Muslim, when he loves, to let his love be for Allah's sake. And when he hates, his hate should be for Allah's sake, not for any worldly benefit and not because of family relations or closeness of blood. The Prophet ﷺ was not moved to anger for his own account, but he became angry when the honor of Allah was violated and when the limits He established for mankind were broken.

To believe in Allah and the Last Day necessitates the following:

One should not attach himself to disbelievers, seek to help them, or hold them in affection. Allah says,
“Never will you find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, having affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their kindred [people].”
(58:22)

⁽³⁴²⁾ Al-Hakim, 2/480. Authentic. (See *Silsilatil Ahadith Assahihah*. Hadith No. 998 for Albani).

⁽³⁴³⁾ Abu Daud Hadith no. (4681). Authentic. (See *Silsilatil Ahadith Assahihah*. Hadith No. 380).

Therefore, the believer's love and bonds of affection go in accordance with what Allah loves and holds in affection. One who loves Allah should not like His enemies. He should not love those whom Allah hates, and he will not be angry with anyone whom Allah loves.

Allah said,

“O believers, take not for friends a people against whom Allah is wrathful” (60:13)

Whoever takes a people as his friends is one of them until he absolves himself of them, for everyone will be brought back on the Day of Judgment with those whom he loves.

Part of allying oneself to the believers is to help believers with your property, and with your blood. Allah said,

“And if they ask help of you regarding the [matter of] religion, then it is on you to help them” (8:72)

He also said,

“Your ally is only Allah and His Messenger, and the believers.” (5:55)

The Prophet ﷺ said, “The believer is to the believer like a building one part of which supports the other,”⁽³⁴⁴⁾ and he said, “The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim: he does not scorn him, he does not forsake him, nor does he deliver him (to the enemies)”⁽³⁴⁵⁾.

Muslims share in one another's misfortunes and they take an interest in one another's condition. They are happy when their brothers are happy and they are upset when misfortune overtakes them. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The example of the believers in their love, affection, and a mercy for one another is as the one body. If any part of the body is ill, then the whole body shares its illness with sleeplessness and fever. All Muslims are like one man. If his eye is sore, then his whole body aches, and if his head is sore, his whole body aches.”⁽³⁴⁶⁾

⁽³⁴⁴⁾ Al-Bukhari, (2446).

⁽³⁴⁵⁾ Al-Bukhari, (2442); Muslim, (2850).

⁽³⁴⁶⁾ Al-Bukhari, (6011); Muslim, (2586).

The disbelievers and the hypocrites are not like this:
“If good touches you, it distresses them, but if harm strikes you, they rejoice at it.” (3:120)

The believers love one another and seek out one another’s company. Allah said,

“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Countenance, and let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly Life.” (18:28)

We should guide them and not expose their shortcomings, nor reveal their secrets to others.

We should want for them what we want for ourselves, and dislike for them what we dislike for ourselves. The Prophet ﷺ said, “None of you believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”⁽³⁴⁷⁾

We should be kind and soft with them, asking Allah to forgive them. But not to be harsh or enemy to them. Our righteous forefathers (i.e the companions of the Prophet ﷺ) were ***“Forceful against disbelievers, merciful among themselves.”*** (48:29)

They used to be, ***“Humble toward the believers, powerful against the disbelievers.”*** (5:54)

It is a sign of swerving and deviance and oppression when the matter is reversed with some Muslims, who become hard toward the believers, but merciful toward the disbelievers, who are humble towards the disbelievers and disdainful towards the believers, opposing the Muslim characteristics as described above in the Qur’an.

Part of allying oneself to the believers is giving love and respect towards the believers and show an observance of obedience to them, and to give no obedience to the disbelievers or alliance to them against believers. Allah said,

⁽³⁴⁷⁾ Al-Bukhari, (13); Muslim, (45).

“O you who have believed, if you obey those who have disbelieved, they will turn you back on your heels, and you will [then] become losers. But Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of helpers.” (3:149-150)

And He said,
“Your ally is [to none] but to Allah and the Messenger and those who have believed.” (5:55)

Why were the jews cursed?

The Jews were cursed by the tongues of their own prophets.

Allah says,
“Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel by the tongue of David, and Jesus, Son of Mary, That was because they disobeyed and transgressed.” (5:78)
They used not to prevent one another from wrongdoing.”

(5:79)

“You see many of them allies of those who disbelieved.” (5:80)

The Qur’an passes judgment upon them saying,
“But if they were believers in Allah, the Prophet and in what has been sent down to him, they would have not taken them as allies. But many of them are defiantly disobedient.” (5:81)

Allah confirms that it is not possible for a believer to take an enemy of Allah as a protecting friend saying, ***“Do those who disbelieved think that they can take My servants as allies apart from Me?”*** (18:102)

Those who take the Jews and Christians as their protecting friends, who value them above the believers as friends, who bind themselves to them and seek out their help, are “People of the Book” like their friends. It does not matter if they pray and fast and pay *zakat* and perform the pilgrimage, their status will be the same as that of a Jew or a Christian. They cannot claim to be real Muslims.

Allah has warned us against helping them and against defending them. Allah also exposed the hypocrites, who allied

themselves to the Jews of Madina, who opposed the Prophet ﷺ.
They claimed to be believers, but Allah said,

“Have you not seen those hypocrites saying to their brothers who disbelieved among the People of the Book, ‘If you are expelled, we will surely leave out with you, and will not obey in regard to you anyone-ever, and if you are fought against, we will surely aid you.’ But Allah testifies that they are liars.” (59:11)

Allah has also forbidden that any Muslim find pleasure in them. They will never be pleased with any believer however much the believers may be pleased with them. Allah said,

“And never will the Jews and the Christians become pleased with you until you follow their religion” (2:120)

They may appear to like you but their hearts are filled with rejection, as Allah has said,

“They please you with their mouths, but their hearts refuse, and most of them are defiantly disobedient.” (9:9),

And again,

“Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, and what their hearts hide is greater.” (3:118)

Allah has forbidden us to trust them, to keep their agreements, or to be reassured by their promises and assurances. No wonder, since Allah says,

“They break their pledge every time, and they do not fear Allah.” (8:56)

He also says that they keep promises only so long as they are weak and subdued by force, but when they gain the upper hand and become strong, they will break their promises. Allah said,

“If they gain dominance over you, they do not observe concerning you any covenant or treaty [of peace or protection].” (9:8)

And He said,

“If they come to know of you, they will stone you or return you to their religion, and you will never [ever] succeed.”
(18:20)

Current events are proof enough of this. When the Muslims ignored this, they were humiliated and the disbelievers came to

rule over them, and they paid the price for this with humiliation
and dispersment.

Allah has forbidden us to draw them near, to show them our
favor, or to honor them.

Allah said,

***“O you who have believed, don’t take My enemy
and your enemy for friends [as allies], extending to
them affection while they have disbelieved in the
truth that had come to you.” (60:1)***

We should not take them rather than believers for trusted
helpers or advisors in matters of faith. Allah said,

***“O you who have believed, don’t take as intimates those
other than yourselves, who would not spare you [any] ruin.
They wished you to suffer. Hatred has already appeared
from their mouths, and what their breasts hide is greater.”
(3:118)***

Muslims are forbidden from resembling them, or taking them as
a model and example in any thing that leads to glorify them by
following their way of dress, or adopting their fashions, or sharing
with them their ceremonies and celebrations. Like wise celebrating
(Christmas) the birthday Jesus whom they believe that he is God.
How a believer allows himself sharing such celebration when he
doesn’t believe that God is begotten!

Thus is the Law of Allah, when we follow their ways, they will
be given superiority and victory over us.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever resembles a people, is
(considered) one of them.”⁽³⁴⁸⁾ The Prophet stressed the necessity
of differing with the disbelievers and the polytheists.

Imitation dissolves the Muslim’s Islamic identity and draws
him into the orbit of whatever he imitates. First he follows them,
then admires them, then becomes fascinated with them, then he
loves them, then gives them loyalty, and what is worst than loving
those whom Allah hates?

⁽³⁴⁸⁾ Abu Daud, (4031).

The Prophet ﷺ said, “One should be gathered on the Day of Resurrection with those he used to love.”⁽³⁴⁹⁾

Among the forms of giving loyalty to the disbelievers are borrowing their man-made laws, and replacing Allah’s Laws with their laws, this is what helped the Jews losing faith after they were believers.

“Haven’t you seen those who claim to have believed in what was revealed to you and what was revealed before you? They want to refer legislation [judgement] to the Taaghoot³⁵⁰ while they were ordered to reject it? And Satan wants to lead them far astray.” (4:60)

Ruling by contradictory human laws is described as falling into ignorance. Allah said,

“Is it the judgement of [the time of] ignorance which they desire? And who is better than Allah in judgement for a people who certainly believe?” (5:50)

The Qur’an denies the faith of those who reject the authority of Allah and His Messenger to settle their disputes:

“But no, by your Lord! they believe not until they make you [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 submission.” (4:65)

As we see, they are required not only to accept, as they may accept it with hatred or with objection which may occur in their hearts, but they are absolutely ordered to accept Allah’s judgment with full contentedness.

It is forbidden for Muslims to depend upon them or to lean obedience in compliance to them. **“And don’t incline toward those wrong-doers [polytheist], lest the Fire touches you, and you have**

⁽³⁴⁹⁾ Bukhari (6170) and Muslim (2639).

⁽³⁵⁰⁾ Every thing that is worshipped apart from Allah or taken as law apart from the Law of Allah is called *Taaghoot*.

for you no protectors apart from Allah, then you will not be helped.” (11:113)

It is also forbidden to compromise with them or to flatter them.

Allah said,

“They wish that you would soften [compromise in your position], then they would soften [compromise to you].” (68:9)

And He said,

“And when they meet those who believed, they say, “We believe”; but when they are alone with their devils [evil companions], they say, “We are with you; but we are only mockers.” (2:14)

Finally, it is forbidden to participate in their festivals, neither to send them greetings and best wishes on their holidays, nor should Muslims offer them gifts to mark such occasions since all these things only glorify their religion, and seem to confirm the false beliefs that they hold.

A correct example of

alliance and disassociation

Allah has given us a shining example of alliance and disassociation in our pious predecessors. Allah said,

“There has already been for you a good example [to follow] in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people, “We are dissociated from you and from whatever you worship apart from Allah. We have denied you, and there has appeared between us and you animosity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah alone.” (60:4)

And Allah tells us how Abraham denounced his father when it became clear to him he would not renounce his disbelief. He said,

“But Abraham’s request of forgiveness for his father was only after a promise he had made to him, but when it became clear to him that he is an enemy to Allah, he dissociated himself from him. For Abraham was indeed compassionate, forbearing.” (9:114)

Our Prophet ﷺ denounced all polytheists even those who were kinsmen and members of his tribe, saying, “The family of so and so are not my friends. My friends are Allah and the righteous among the believers.”⁽³⁵¹⁾

Being friends with the disbelievers is even more odious when they are at war with Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and when they scheme to stamp out Islam and persecute the Muslims. Allah made a distinction between a disbeliever who submitted to the Muslims and a disbeliever who made war upon them. He began by speaking of the first group and said,

“Allah does not forbid you from being righteous and act justly toward those who did not fight you for religion, nor drive you out of your homes, for Allah loves those who act justly. Only Allah forbids you that you make allies [friends] to those who fought you because of religion, and have driven you out from your homes and helped [others] to drive you out. For whoever makes allies of them, those are indeed the wrongdoers.” (60:8-9)

In another verse:

“Whoever among you becomes an ally to them, then he is [considered one] of them.” (5:51)

Taking for friends those disbelievers who persecute a group of the Muslims is also an odious thing. Allah said,

“Let not believers take disbelievers as allies [supporters, protectors] apart from believers. And whoever does that, is not of Allah in anything unless you avoid them a cause of fear them.”
(3:28).

This means that Muslims should not take disbelievers as supporting friends against another group of Muslims, teaching them how they are vulnerable and exposing their weaknesses to them. Allah has absolved Himself of whoever does this, since he would have turned his back on his faith by entering into a pact with the disbelievers. The only exception that will be made is for

⁽³⁵¹⁾ Al-Bukhari, (5990).

weakness, which leads him to be forced by the disbelievers into such an alliance.

Believers are friends of one another, and they help one another.

Allah: said,

“Believing men and believing women are allies of one another.” (9:71)

Similarly, the hypocrites and the disbelievers are friends of one another,

“Hypocrite men and hypocrite women are [allies] of one another” (9:67)

Allah has promised a painful punishment for those allying themselves to the disbelievers:

“Give tidings to the hypocrites that there is for them a painful punishment. Those who take disbelievers as allies instead of believers, do they seek with them glory [honor through power]? But glory altogether belongs to entirely.” (4:138-139)

And He also said,

“And glory is to Allah, and to His Messenger and the believers, but the hypocrites do not know.”
(63:8)

It is impossible that the disbelievers and the hypocrites would ever take true believers as their protecting friends. Allah said,

“Do those who disbelieved think that they can take My servants as allies apart from Me?” (18:102)

The only people among the ‘believers’ who ally themselves to hypocrites are, in fact, hypocrites. They assume they are believers, but Allah knows the truth about them.

That is why when the hypocrites of Madina allied themselves to the Jews, Allah bound them to one another as brothers with the ties of disbelief. He said,

“Have you not seen those hypocrites saying to their brothers who disbelieved among the People of the Book, ‘If you are expelled, we will surely leave out with you, and will not obey in regard to

you anyone-ever, and if you are fought against, we will surely aid you.’ But Allah testifies that they are liars.” (59:11)

Is it not strange then that Allah said,
“*Whoever among you becomes an ally to them, then he is [considered one] of them.*” (5:51)

Everyone who loves the disbelievers, glorifies them, befriends with them and assists them against the believers, choosing them rather than the believers as friends, is one of them: brothers of the same mold. To befriend the disbelievers and to submit to them is like inclining towards them.

Allah has promised a painful punishment on the Day of Resurrection to those who incline towards them and submit themselves to them obediently.

Allah said,
“*And don’t incline toward those wrong-doers [polytheist], lest the Fire touches you, and you have for you no protectors apart from Allah, then you will not be helped.*”
(11:113)

The distinction between renouncing responsibility for someone and allying yourself to them.

There is a difference between allying yourself to wrongdoers and dealing with them justly and fairly. This is especially important with regard to one’s actions towards parents who are not Muslims. When disbelievers behave towards Muslims in the spirit of justice and fairness, they are not the same as the disbelievers who make war on Islam. Allah mentions this when He said,
“*And don’t let the hatred of a people for having obstructed you from the Holy Mosque [of Makkah] lead you to commit aggression*” (5:2),
and He also said,
“*Let not the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just. That is nearer to godfearing [righteousness].*” (5:8)

Allah distinguishes between those who fight against faith and those who do not.

“Only Allah forbids you that you make allies [friends] to those who fought you because of religion, and have driven you out from your homes and helped [others] to drive you out. For whoever makes allies of them, those are indeed the wrongdoers.” (60:8-9)

Here Allah mentions two types of disbelievers:

- Disbelievers who do not fight the Muslims because of their religion.
 - Disbelievers who fight the Muslims, Allah, and His Messenger, in an attempt to wipe Islam off the face of the earth.
- As for the first group, we may simply absolve ourselves of responsibility for them. However, we are not permitted to take members of either group as protecting friends and allies.

We should deal justly and fairly with them, but we are not permitted to take disbelievers for protecting friends and allies, even if they do not make war against Islam and the Muslims. Allah has commanded us to deal justly and fairly with both groups of people, with our brothers and with our enemies, saying,

“Let not the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just. That is nearer to godfearing [righteousness].” (5:8)

Glossary

- Ahlul bid'a wal-ahawaa** People of innovation and of vain desire.
- Ahlul-Ahwa'a** People of vain desire.
- Ahlulfatrah** People of non-message period, who didn't hear the message.
- Ahlusunnah-WalJamaah** Adherents of sunnah, and its group who are the followers of the Prophet's way & and maintainers of the Muslim unity).
- Ahmaq** A simple minded one.
- Al-'Asma` wa'l-Siffat** Sometimes described as the "names and attributes of Allah." This refers to the Ways that Allah has described or named Himself in the revelation.
- Al-Ayatul-Kubra** The great miracle.
- Al-Bara,** dissociation, or freeing one-self from the way of evil and those who call for it.
- Al-Ghaib** The unseen. Knowledge which Allah has revealed to whom He will.
- Al-Hamdu lillah** Praise is due to Allah.
- Al-Hisn-Al-Haseen** the protective fortress or shield.
- Al-Khawarij** Those extremists who declared disobedience to the third leader Ali Bin Abi Talib.
- Allah** Is the proper name of the God of all creations.
- Allahu Akbar** Allah is the Greatest.
- Al-Nahrawan** A river in Iraq.
- Al-Wala'a Wal-Bara'a** Alliance, that is to bind oneself to those who obey Allah, love them, to help them, and to disassociate oneself from people of *shirk* and *kufir* (disbelief) and to hold them in contempt and enmity for their rebellion against Allah, and for their disbelief.

Al-Wala'a,	Alliance and loyalty given to every believer.
Amin	O Allah, hear my call.
Arafat	A mount twelve miles away from Makkah where the pilgrims stay at the ninth day of the pilgrimage.
	Is the plural of wali which means: one who is righteous and near to Allah in honor (see Wali). Awlia
	Ayaat Verses, signs.
Baitul-Mamoor	Verse, sign. Ayah A place in the Seventh Heaven over the Ka'aba, which, if it fell, would fall directly on the Ka'aba.
Barzakh	A period man remains after death till resurrection.
Da'eef	Weak, it is used in the Hadith terminology for the weak and doubted narrations.
Dajjal	Anti-Christ who claims prophethood then divinity.
Deenar	Old golden currency.
Dhikr	Remembrance of Allah.
Dhulm	Wrongdoing, oppression.
Duhriah	Servants or of life, who deny all revelations and disbelieve in the rising of the dead and the Day of Judgment, and saying "Nothing but our worldly life, we die and live, and nothing destroys us except fate".
Eenah	Doing buisness similar to Riba. This is to sell goods to someone for a specific price while setting a time in the future for delivery, then buying back the same goods for a lower price before delivery.
	Eid Feast day.
Falammaa Aslamaa	When they both submitted.
Fatrah	a period that had known no Prophet.
Fatwa	Verdict, or legal ruling on the issue of religious importance.

Fatwa	Verdict or legal ruling on an issue of religious importance.
Fisq	Abomination, transgression.
Fitnah	A word that has comprehensive meaning due to the context, it means, trial, test, temptation.
Fitrah	The inner nature that Allah fixed in people which no one can change.
A narration by the Prophet on behalf of Allah which is not in the Qur'an.	Hadith Qudsi
Hadith	The speech of the prophet ﷺ which was narrated.
Hajj	Pilgrimage.
Halal	Any thing that Allah made allowed for people.
Halal	Lawful.
Haram	Any thing that Allah made disallowed.
Hasana	Good deed, or charity.
hasanaat	good deeds.
Hijab	Vale.
Hijaz	The western cost in Arabian peninsula.
Hujjah	Evidence
Ihram	A state which a pilgrim is prohibited to practice but are lawful at other times, such as covering ones head or to intercourse his wife or cutting ones hair or nail or hunting or helping others to hunt.
Ihsaan	To confer favors, or perform an action in the most perfect manner. It means according to the Prophet's definition, "To worship Allah as if you see Him."
Ijtihad	Exerting one's effort to produce a verdict (school of thought), or to exert one's effort by reasoning to differentiate right from wrong when no clear evidence could be obtained from the Quran or the Sunnah, or reasoning process by which

	Islamic laws are deduced after thorough research.
Imam	A great scholar, leader of school of thought.
	Iman faith.
Islam	Total submission to Allah.
	Isnad Chain of transmission.
Israfil	The name of an angel whose mission is to blow the trumpet.
Jaahiliah	The period of ignorance where people loose guidance of messengers.
Jabriyah	A sect who approve the predestination but with extremes till they made Allah the doer of the evil deeds that His servants do.
Jahmiah	Group emerged at the early times of Islam who denied Allah's attributes.
	To speak with miraculous conciseness and depth of meaning (little words with great meaning). Jawami' ul-kalim
Jebreel	The angel who Christians call Gabriel.
Jinn	Creatures that are made of fire, among them are those who believe, others are disbelievers.
jizya	poll tax which the Islamic state obligates Christian or Jews to pay while being under its authority.
Ka'ba	The House of Allah (See Makkah).
	kaba-er Major sins.
Kadhaab	A liar, it is also used in the Hadeeth terminology as a reference for one who was caught with lies against the Prophet.
Karaamah	the extra ordinary works that Allah supports His righteous people with, as a sign of honor to them.
	Khalifa Successor.

Khawarij	A group of army who declared rebellion to the leader of Muslims because of their extremism.
	Kuffar Disbelievers.
	Kufr Disbelief.
	Kufr-Al-Nimah The denial of Allah's grace.
	La ilaha ila Allah There is no God (worthy of worship) except but Allah.
	A school of thought whether legal or philosophical. Madh-hab
Mahdi	A reformer who belongs to the family of the Prophet, and whom the Prophet prophesied his coming to be at the same time with the coming of Jesus ε
	Maitah animals found dead unslaughtered.
	Makkah The House of Allah.
Marwa	A place near Makkah where Ishmael's mother was looking for water for him, it is today one of the places that Muslims perform the rites of pilgrimage.
Maudu	a false narration fabricated about the prophet ε.
Mika'il	The name of the angel of rain which brings life to green things and revives the earth.
	Minbar pulpit.
Mowahid	One who worship His God only without setting up any partner with Him.
Mu'tazalites	Followers of the philosophical school of thought commonly called rationalism. They deny Allah's attributes by giving them false meanings.
	mu-adhin One who calls for the prayer.
Mufti	A scholar able to give legal rulings on old or new situations.
	Muhajarin and Ansar two tribes in Madinah who were fighting one another and who became brothers in faith.
	Mujahid Warrior for the sake of Allah.

	Munkar and Nakir	Two angels who come to interrogate the dead in their graves asking them four testing questions.
	Murji'ah	Those who delay works from faith claiming that faith can be established even without works.
	Muwa-hid	The monotheist who worships Allah alone.
		Nahrawan A river in Persia.
		Nifaq Hypocrisy.
Qada & Qadar		Is Allah's divine knowledge of what will be, and Allah's writing of the destiny of all that will be until the end of time. A distinction is made between <i>qadar</i> and <i>qada'</i> , the former being considered Allah's divine knowledge of what will become of creation in the future, and the latter being Allah's direction of events according to His knowledge and His will.
	Qadariya	A sect who denied the predestination of Allah.
	Qareen	The jinn who accompany a person throughout their life.
	Qiblah	A direction for Muslim in prayer.
	Qiyam	Standing in prayer at night.
	Quraish	People of Makkah.
Rayyan		A door in Paradise which those who used fast and get thirsty in the world by fasting will be entering Paradise threw this door of satisfaction from thirst, one drink and they will never become thirsty.
		Riba Usury.
	Ridgatul-Khabal	A pool of foul and stinking water squeezed out of the people of Hell.
	Riya'a	dissimulation (showing off).

Ruqyah	Is a kind of supplication or recitation taken from the Qur'an or the <i>Sunnah</i> which is read upon someone who is ill.
Safa & Marwa	One of the sacred places where the pilgrim performs his rites in Hajj or Umrah.
	Sahih Correct.
Salaf	Predecessors, the companions of the Prophet ε.
	Salat Prayer.
	Shafa-ah Intercession.
Shafi'I	One of the greatest scholars in Islam.
	Shariah The Law of Allah.
	Sheikh Scholar
Shi-ah	Means cult. It is used as reference to the <i>shi-ite</i> cult who exaggerate in their "love" to the family of the Prophet ε until they were deviated from the path.
Shirk	Setting up partners with Allah, supplicating others with Him, claiming that these are mediators who draw us nearer to Him, or giving love, fear, hope, submission, obedience to others equal to that should be given to Allah.
Signs	Mostly used in this book as the verses of Allah's revelation, also it means miracles.
	sirat The path.
	Subhan Allah Allah is exalted.
	Subhan-Allah Allah is the Exalted.
Sufis	Those who innovate in religion's ways of worship that enormously negates with Islam but agree with ancient cults such as Budism Hinduism Etc.
Suhuf	Scriptures or scrolls revealed to Ibrahim and Mosa.
Sunnah	The way of the Prophet ε.
	Sura Chapter.
Taabi'een	The generation who did not see the Prophet ε but saw his companions who taught them the religion.

Taaghoot	False deities and whatever is worshipped beside Allah or whatever law is taken to replace Allah's Law.
Taa-weel	means interpretation but some distort the text and call it taa-weel, which should be called (tahreef) corruption or distortion, which means to give the names of Allah wrong meanings. That is to give the word a meaning by their own creation, despite their confession that the meaning they gave is not definite.
Tabarayah	A lake in northern Palestine, near Golan and Galilee.
Tafsir	Interpretation of the Qur'an.
Tahreef	twisting the meaning of the text.

	Takbir	Saying Allahu Akbar.
Takfeer mu-ayyan	An accusation of disbelief directed to a particular individual.	
Takfeer-Mutlaq	An accusation of disbelief without naming a particular person.	
Talbiah	Saying, "Here I am My God, here I am." As an expression of response to the call for Hajj or Umrah.	
	blind following.	Taqleed
	Taqwa	Piety or Godfearing.
	Tarawih	night prayers of Ramadaan.
	Tasbih	praising.
Taslim	The Muslim salutation of peace at the end of his prayer, saying (<i>assalamu alaikum warahmatullah</i>).	
Tawakul	Trusting Allah and depending Him.	
Tawassul	Seeking the intervention of intermediaries in one's prayers to Allah.	
Tawheed Al-Ibadah	Giving worship devoutly to Allah alone.	
Tawhid Al-ruboobia	To believe that there is one Creator or one Lord.	
Tawhid Al-Uloohia	To worship the One Creator alone.	
Tawhid	The purely Unitarian concept of Allah, found only in Islam in which Allah is considered as being uniquely One in His essence, qualities and actions.	
	Tawhid Worshipping Allah alone.	
Tiarah	To see evil omen in things (pessimists), numbers or animals, the flights of birds, and by other things. This word was derived from the word <i>tair</i> (bird). When the people of <i>Jaahiliah</i> (ignorance) intended to travel or to do any other thing, they used to watch the bird that stood	

over their houses. If it flew
to the right, they became
optimistic, and they did the
thing they intended, but if
it flew to the left they
became pessimistic, and
then they did not travel.

Tinatul-Khabal is the discharge from the vaginas
of prostitutes.

Uhud Mountain in Madinah

Ummah nation of the Muslims.

The one who is close to Allah and beloved to Him.

Wali of Allah

The one who is close to Allah and beloved to Him.

Wali

Waseelah seeking the means or approach. Also the
prophet's position in Heaven is called
Waseelah.

Wilaya friendship or closeness to Allah.

Yajuj and Ma'juj Gog and Magog.

Zakat al-fitr Special charity given at the last days of
Ramadan till the day of Eid before
performing its prayer.

**A tree growing in Hell which will be the food of the
people of Hell.**

Zaqqûm

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Contents

1. SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION	3
Food for the Body and Food for the Soul	6
THE RETURN TO THE PURE FAITH	3
PURE FAITH LEADS TO SALVATION	7
WHY WE WORSHIP GOD?	7
TRUE FAITH AND FALSE RELIGION	8
THE PROLIFERATION OF RELIGIONS	12
SINCE ALLAH IS ONE THEN HIS RELIGION IS ONE	14
THE WAY TO ACHIEVE HAPPINESS	15
FOOD FOR THE BODY AND FOOD FOR THE SOUL	17
THREER IS NONE BUT HIM	19
O PEOPLE, WORSHIP YOUR LORD	21
TWO VALUABLE RULES	24
THE CONSEQUENCE OF INSINCERITY	25
BELIEF IN ALLAH	27
LOOK AND CONTEMPLATE	29
A TURNING AWAY AND NOT A DENIAL	31
THE MEANING OF FAITH IN ALLAH	34
THE SPIRIT OF WORSHIP	34
THE SUBLIME NAMES OF ALLAH	35
THREE FUNDAMENTAL RULES REGARDING THE DIVINE NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH	39
TYPES OF ATTRIBUTES	47
When rationalization is a disease and not a cure	47
Rationalization is an innovation in Islam	49
NOT EVERY BELIEF IS APPROVED	50
Not every faith is sound	50
2. SECTION TWO	52
THE QUR'AN AS THE FIRST SOURCE	53
THE MIRACLE OF THE QUR'AN	55
THE SUNNAH AS THE SECOND SOURCE	59
The collection and recording of the Sunnah	63
How hadith narrations are confirmed	65
THE COMPANIONS ARE THE BEST INTERPRETERS OF THE BOOK AND THE SUNNAH	71
PRESERVING THE PURITY OF THE SOURCES AND AVOIDING INNOVATIONS	72
THE PROPHET'S LAST ADVICE	75
THE POSITION OF THE SALAF REGARDING INNOVATION IN RELIGION	79
CONCLUSION	80
THE CONSEQUENCES OF BID'A (INNOVATION)	81

ASPECTS OF FAITH	82
FEATURES OF TAWHID	85
THE MERITS OF TAWHID	86
ABSOLUTE MONOTHEISM: THE ESSENCE OF ISLAM	91
THE CONDITIONS OF TESTIMONY <i>LA ILAHA ILA'LLAH</i>	93
CONTRADICTION OF FAITH	96
THE SIGNS OF TRUE DEVOTION (MONOTHEISM)	99
THE SIGNS OF TRUE LOVE	103
THE PILLARS OF ISLAM	110
THE CONCEPT OF ISLAM	111
THE STORY OF ABRAHAM AND ISMAEL: A LESSON IN SUBMISSION AND SURRENDER	111
BELIEF IN THE ONENESS OF ALLAH	113
BELIEF THAT MUHAMMAD IS HIS MESSENGER	114
The conditions of belief in the Mohammad's Prophethood	115
Summary	117
THE WORLD BEFORE MUHAMMAD'S PROPHETHOOD	118
THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE PROPHETHOOD OF MUHAMMAD	122
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRAYER	123
PAYING ZAKAT (CHARITY)	126
THE FAST OF RAMADAN	128
THE PILGRIMAGE	131
4. SECTION FOUR	
THE PILLARS OF FAITH	
Lie can be found not only in speech but in acts	133
FAITH is in word and in deed, and it increases and decreases	134
The Light of Faith and the Darkness of Disbelief	135
 BELIEF IN ANGELS	137
Their characteristics	137
Their Number	138
Their mission	138
The purpose of their creation	139
The value of the believer before the Angels	142
Effects on the believers of the belief in Angels	143
What is your faith in the angels?	144
What disturbs man disturbs angels	145
The spiritual merits of the Angels and of Human Beings	146
BELIEF IN THE REVEALED BOOKS (the third principle of faith)	147
The Qur'an's abrogation of the Torah and the Gospel	148
The current state of the previous revelations	149
Acknowledgment of distortion in the Scriptures	151
The Muslim position on the Scriptures of the Christians and the Jews	152
The point of believing in all of Allah's books	154

BELIEF IN THE MESSENGERS	155
The Humanness of the messengers	156
The Seal of the prophets	158

5. SECTION FIVE

AL-QADAR (MATTER OF PREDESTINATION AND GOD'S	
159	WILL)
THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN QADAR AND QADA'	159
The correct understanding of qadar	160
SOURCE OF THE BELIEF IN QADR	161
The error of belief in predestination	163
A refutation of the false claims about qadar	165
THE EFFECT OF THE BELIEF IN QADAR AMONG THE PIOUS	
PREDECESSORS	168
BEING SATISFIED WITH ALLAH'S WILL	170

6. SECTION SIX

172	BELIEF OF THE LAST DAY
THE QUR'ANIC CONCERN FOR THE LAST DAY	174
The Prophet's concern for the Last Day	176
Who is the spendthrift.	178
DEATH	179
The critical moments of death	179
Whoever desires to be brought before Allah, Allah desires that he be brought before Him	180
Punishment and reward in the grave	181
The period of <i>barzakh</i> (interval between death and resurrection)	181
Test and torment of the grave	183
An innovation that must be abandoned	183
Those who believe in the unseen	185
Examples of the punishment of the grave	185
THE DAY OF RESURRECTION	167
SIGNS OF THE HOUR	189
The Lesser Signs	189
The Greater Signs	193
The Sounding of the Trumpet	196
The Sounding of the Resurrection	197
EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION AND THE RULING ON	
THOSE WHO DENY IT	198
The corrupt will deny the resurrection	199
How Some people will be resurrected	201
The Gathering	203
Those who will be shielded on the Day of Resurrection	208
The Pool	210
THE ACCOUNT AND THE REWARD	211
And your Lord wrongs no one.	213
Allah will call everyone account, though we may forget Him.	215
Allah counted it, while they forgot it	215
Ways of Reckoning on the Day of Resurrection	217

	Symbols of easy and difficult reckoning	217
	The first thing a person will be asked	220
	Who will first enter Hell?	220
	THE SCALES	223
	The exposure of the Hypocrites	226
	THE PATH (<i>al-sirat</i>)	229
	Types of crossing	229
	Those who fall from the bridge over Hell	231
	The power of the declaration of the Oneness of Allah	231
	The power of prostration before Allah	231
232	<i>INTERCESSION</i>	
	CONDITIONS OF INTERCESSION	233
	TYPES OF INTERCESSION	235
	The intercession of disbelievers	235
	Intercession of the Muslims	235
	The intercession of Allah	237
	The Intercession of (reciting) the Qur'an and (establishing) the prayer	238
	The Intercession of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.	238
	How to gain the Intercession of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ?	240
	SOME IMPORTANT ISSUES REGARDING INTERCESSION	241
	HEAVEN AND HELL	243
	THE FIRST TO ENTER PARADISE	247
	THE END OF DEATH	249
	ALLAH'S CALL TO THE PEOPLE OF PARADISE	249
	THE LAST TO ENTER PARADISE	252
	ALL PRAISE IS HIS FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END	254
	GREETINGS OF PEACE IN THE HOUSE OF PEACE	255
	HELL-FIRE	257
	The least punishment	261
	The arguing between the People of Paradise and the People of Hell	263
	The Mutual Recriminations of the People of the Fire	265
	Satan Lectures his followers in Hell	268
	BENEFITS OF BELIEF IN THE LAST DAY	270
	Who loves this world harms his next world	273

7. SECTION SEVEN

BLIND FOLLOWING (IJTIHAD & TAQLEED)	
TWO CASES FOR CONSIDERATION	277
REASONABLE QUESTIONS TO ASK	279
THEIR DIFFER IS OUR TEST	284
FANATICISM FOR MADHHABS	286
FANATICISM IS NOT A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE TRUE FAITH	287
WHEN FOLLOWING TRADITION IS PERMITTED?	288
THOSE WHOM ALLAH LOVES AND PROTECTS	
289	(AWLIA)
GLORIFYING GRAVES AND EXAGGERATING ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUS—THE ORIGIN OF THE FIRST AGE OF IGNORANCE	291
TAKING AWLIA'A AS MEDIATORS (WASEELAH) IS NOT ISLAMIC	292
THE TRUTH ABOUT INTERMEDIERY (AL-TAWASSUL)	293
TYPES OF LEGAL <i>awassul</i> IN ISLAM	295
THE FORMS OF PERMITTED <i>tawasul</i> IN ISLAM	296
THE MIRACLES OF THE RIGHTEOUS ONES (<i>karaamaatul-awlia'a</i>)	298
What is the purpose of miracles (<i>karaamah</i>) ?	301
Bearing Witness that a Person is a Wali of Allah	303
WHO ARE THE MOST EXCELLENT OF ALLAH'S PROTECTED FRIENDS	307
ENMITY AND FRIENDSHIP MAY MEET IN ONE PERSON	307
CAN A PERSON SAY, I' AM A WALI OF ALLAH ?	309

8. SECTION EIGHT

311	1. KUFR: A CONTRADICTION OF FAITH	
	GREATER DISBELIEF	312
	LESSER DISBELIEF	315
	RULING ACCORDING TO OTHER THAN WHAT ALLAH HAS REVEALED: GREATER OR LESSER DISBELIEF?	317
	2. HYPOCRISY	320
	ACCUSATIONS OF HYPOCRISY	321
	ACCUSATION OF DISBELIEF	322
	The Consequences of declaring a muslim's disbelief	324
	Fundamental Issues in the Matter of Takfir	331
	The wrong way of accusing others with blasphemy	335
	Declaring the disbelief of a particular person	338
	Thr dual nature of the soul	339
	Give him proof (<i>hujjah</i>) before accusing him	341
	TALKING ABOUT OTHERS SHOULD BE WITHKNOWLEDGE AND JUSTICE	343
	Consider this great hadith of the Prophet	343
	SWIFTNESS TO JUDGE OTHERS IS A FORM OF EXTREMISM	345
	A great hadith worthy to read	346

	How Satan takes advantage of extremism?	347
	IS IGNORANCE AN EXCUSE?	349
	PEOPLE OF NONMESSAGE PERIOD (<i>ahlul-fatrah</i>)	355
	9. SECTION NINE	
357	THE EMERGENCE OF SHIRK	
	VARIETIES OF <i>SHIRK</i>	359
	CREATOR AND RULER	364
	LESSER <i>SHIRK</i>	366
	HOW TO AVOID SHOWING OFF	367
	MAGIC	370
	KINDS OF MAGIC	371
	The verdicts (<i>fatwa</i>) about magic	372
	FORTUNE-TELLERS AND SOOTHSAYERS	373
	The ruling on the use of charms	373
	The ruling on the visitor of fortune-tellers	374
	The ruling about fortune-tellers themselves	375
	How to expose a fortune-teller	376
	Astrology is a branch of magic	376
	What is the alternative	379
	How to protect yourself against Satan	381
	Doubts and their answers	383
	THE FLIGHTS OF BIRDS	386
	CHARMS	388
	RUKIYA	389
	SEANCES	390
	The way they deceive people	392
	10. SECTION TEN	
	ALLIANCE AND DISSOCIATION (<i>wala'a and bara'a</i>)	393
	WHY WERE THE JEWS CURSED?	397
	A CORRECT EXAMPLE OF ALLIANCE AND DISASSOCIATION	402
	THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN RENOUNCING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOMEONE AND ALLYING YOURSELF TO THEM.	406
409	GLOSSARY	
414	BIBLIOGRAPHY	
417	CONTENTS	

