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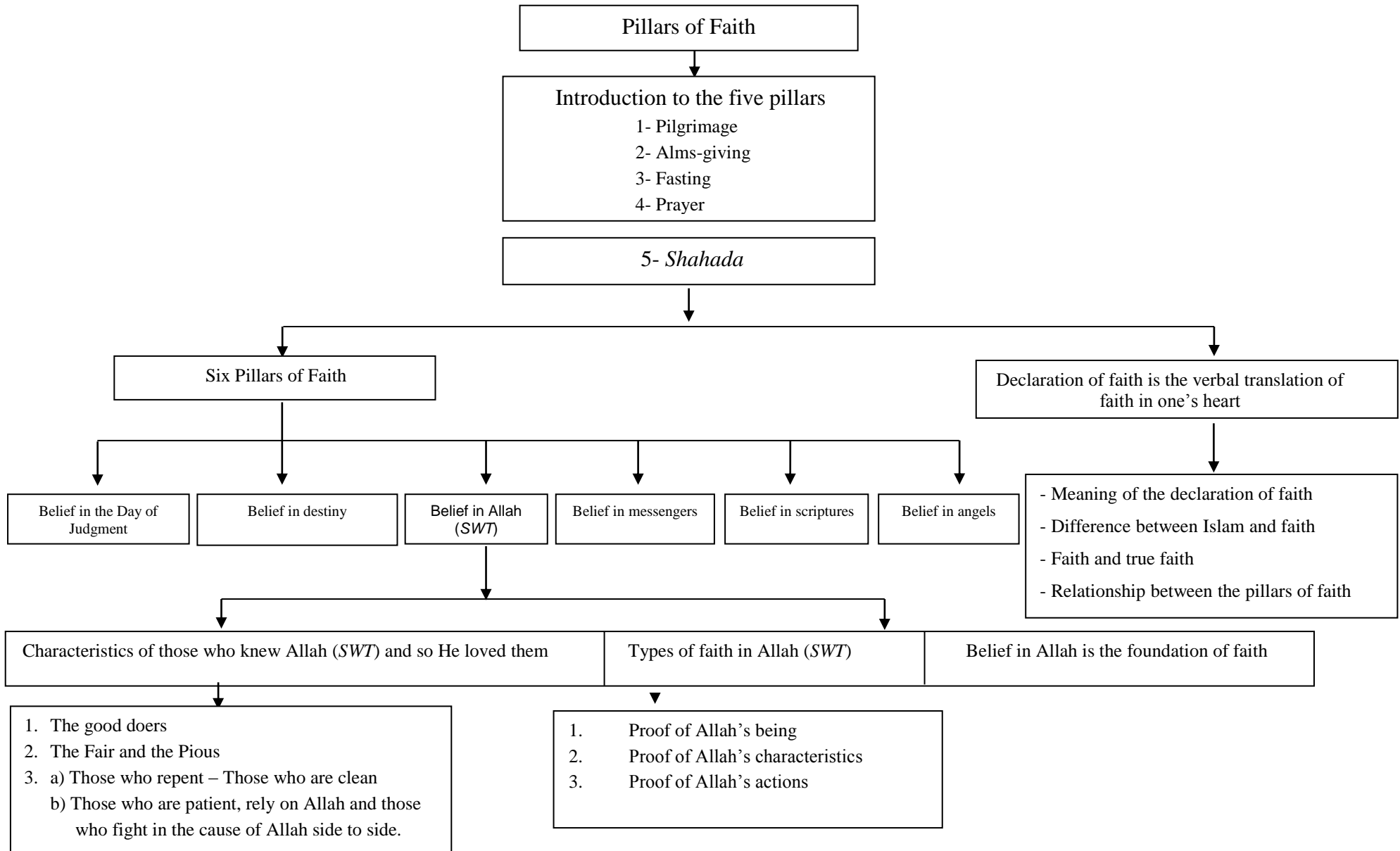
¹ The word Allah is the Arabic term for God. Although the use of the word "Allah" is most often associated with Islam, it is not used exclusively by Muslims; Arab Christians and Arabic-speaking Jews also use it to refer to the One God. The Arabic word expresses the unique characteristics of the One God more precisely than the English term. Whereas the word "Allah" has no plural form in Arabic, the English form does. Allah is the God worshipped by all Prophets, from Adam to Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

² SWT = Subhanahu wa Ta'ala [Glorified and Exalted Be He].

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Phase Two: Guidance *on* the Straight Path



In the Most Beautiful Names of Allah (SWT) we begin this book

In the name of the Entirely Merciful, but Whom there is no god	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Witnessing
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Entirely Merciful	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Truth
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ultimate Trustee
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Sovereign	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Powerful
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Most Holy	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Firm
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Peace (The Giver of Peace)	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Patronizing Patron
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supreme Believer (The Giver of Belief)	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Praiseworthy
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supremely Hegemonic	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Reckoner
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Almighty	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Originator
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Potentate	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Restorer
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supremely Proud	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Giver of Life
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Creator	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Giver of Death
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Initiator	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever- Living
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supreme Fashioner	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Upright Sustainer
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Forgiver	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Perceiver
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Vanquisher	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Glorified
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Bestower	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the One
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Provider	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Everlasting Sovereign
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superb Arbitrator	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Omnipotent
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Knowing	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supreme Determiner
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Withholder	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Expediter
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Expander	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Delayer
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Abaser	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the First
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Exalter	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Last

In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Bestower of Honor	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Manifest
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Humiliator	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Immanent
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Hearing	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Governor
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Seeing	In the name of the Entirely -Merciful, the Supremely Exalted
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Judge	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Benign
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Just	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Superbly Relenting
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Gentle	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Avenger
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Aware	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Effacer of sins
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Forbearing	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Compassionate
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Magnificent	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Eternal Owner of Sovereignty
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Forgiving	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Owner of Majesty and Bounty
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Appreciative	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Equitable
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Exalted	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Gatherer
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Great	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Affluent
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Preserving	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Enricher
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supreme Nourisher	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Preventer
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Reckoner	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Afflicter
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Sublime	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Propitious
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Generous	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Light
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Watcher	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Guide
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Supreme Answerer	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Innovating
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Embracing	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Everlasting
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Wiser	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ultimate Inheritor
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Affectionate	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Guide to the Right Path
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Ever-Glorious	In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the All-Patient
In the name of the Entirely Merciful, the Resurrector	

In the name of Allah. We believe in Allah and we Trust in Allah through His Most Beautiful Names

We begin with what Allah begins His exalted book; al-Fatiha. As it is the beginning of the Book of Allah, so it should be at the beginning of every book. Allah says what can be translated as, **“In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. [All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds - The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful, Sovereign of the Day of Recompense. It is You we worship and You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path - The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.”** (TMQ³, 1:1-7).

Author's preface

- The thought of writing this book, first came on Sunday, 24th Jan, 1999, 7th Shawwal, 1419 A.H.⁴. After praying *Isitkharah* (prayer for guidance), I started writing some thoughts to determine its aim, how it would be produced, the writing style, the languages to which it would be translated at the same time (Arabic, French, and English), publishing it after being authorized by the Islamic Research Academy (IRA)—to be posted-on the Internet, so non-Muslims, and non-Arabic speakers in the whole world would benefit from it. May Allah expand the breasts with this book to take the straight road to Allah.
- As one's intention is better than his deed, so evoking the right intention to write this book was of the priorities that had to be determined before commencing this large project.
- By writing this book, I intend to deliver the knowledge, which I had been gifted by Allah, to the largest number of people, Muslims and non-Muslims. Hopefully, Allah would make people benefit from this knowledge, after my life in this short worldly life comes to an end.

Subject of the Book

This book is about how to know the road to Allah (*AWJ*⁵) in a clear, accurate, consistent way, and documented by the Qur'an and *sunnah* (the Prophet's tradition), (*SAWS*)⁶.

The book begins with an introduction to the human self and how to reach for it. How through reflection and contemplation make the mind believe that this universe has One God, Who Has no partners. Then declaring *shahadah*⁷ and entering Islam, fulfilling the five pillars. This is accompanied by a discussion about the meaning of the belief in the unseen, its foundations, and levels. This discussion includes acquainting with the Qur'an and the Prophet (*SAWS*). Then a discourse about the levels of becoming closer to Allah by how guidance occurs, ways of winning *jannah* (paradise) of Allah, then His love, followed, how could souls elevate from the level of the soul that enjoins evil, to the reproaching soul, and then to the reassured soul.

We will also be discussing how to learn the Qur'an and *sunnah* of the Prophet. Through it, we would understand the permissible and forbidden deeds, the meaning of the good deeds, and

³ TMQ=Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'an. This translation is for the realized meaning, so far, of the stated (Surah:Ayah) of the Qur'an. Reading the translated meaning of the Qur'an can never replace reading it in Arabic, the language in which it was revealed.

⁴ A.H = after *hijrah* of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah in 622 A.D.

⁵ *Aza-Wa-Jal* [Glorified and Sublime be He].

⁶ *Salla Allah alayhe Wa Salam* [All Prayers and Peace of Allah be upon him]

⁷ The Muslim declaration of faith, that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah

eating from the good things-provided by Allah. Add to it, the human's role in this worldly life, as Allah (*AWJ*) wants. We would also be tackling corruption and setting things right on earth, the Qur'anic legislations that control the earth, the relations among people on all levels, with the aim of spreading peace and love amongst Muslims, so every human hand on earth would be a builder, reformer, helper, teacher, supporter of truth. It would be compassionate towards orphans, feed the needy, bring happiness to the sad, lift the affliction from the misfortune, secure the scared, and drive the devils of humans and jinn away from us.

In this discussion, also, we would be tackling the notions of truth, bounty, good-doing, and their effect on building the ideal, good, reforming human society, which fights all kinds of corruption.

Then, we would move to the end of this worldly life, Resurrection, Gathering, Judgment, paradise, and hellfire, until the very end when they bring death in the form of a male sheep and be slaughtered at the Straight Path. It is then said, "O you, people of paradise, this is eternity, with no death. O you, people of hellfire, this is eternity and death..."⁸ then the Last Day comes to an end, and begins the eternal life.

Methodology of the Book

- The aim of the book is to introduce the reader to the road to Allah (*AWJ*), which is the shortest and only road, according to the Qur'an, that is the straight path.
- **The first part** of this road is a discussion addressing every person, who knows nothing about this road, or Islam. Here, the methodology would be through convincing by reason, logic, and scientific facts in all inferences. By this, it would take this person to the conviction of the meaning of faith, declaring *shahada* of the Oneness-of Allah- with all implications this *shahada* has. Thus, this person would transform from a mere creature, to a Muslim servant of his creator; Allah.
- This part of the book takes the reader by the hand and walks with them towards the straight path, which is the entrance to the road to Allah. The road that ends with stepping into the straight path, that is Islam.
- **The second part** of this book addresses the reader, who already declared *shahada*; believes in the Six Pillars of Faith; is Muslim, who believes in all that is mentioned in the Qur'an. In this case, all inferences are going to be from the Great Qur'an and *sunnah* of our noble Prophet (*SAWS*), as they are the main two sources of Islamic legislation, which is the religion of Allah to all creatures. It never changed and there is no other but it. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, "**Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account.**" (TMQ, 3:19). He also says what can be translated as, "**And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me."**" (TMQ, 21:25). Even if Divine legislations and sacred Books were multiple, yet the origin is one. It is like the mother who has multiple children.

This part that introduces the Muslim to the road to Allah will be but the interpretation of al-Fatiha, by which Allah begins His Book. It is also the foundation of the Book; it is the seven of the often repeated *ayat*⁹(verses). It shows the way to Allah, the straight path, from the very beginning right to the end. We would interpret the Qur'an through the Qur'an itself, for this

⁸ Authentic hadith, narrated by Abdullah Ibn-Omar, *Hilyat al-Awleya'*, no. 8/197.

⁹ Ayat: singular: Ayah.

the most truthful interpretations. Our honorable reader would be amazed that this *surah* (chapter of the Qur'an), which consists of seven *ayat*, has gathered all the meanings in its letters and between its words, which the praying person repeats it in their prayers, at least, 17 times day and night.

Intention and Aim of Reading this book

The reader should evoke their right intention when reading this book. We should make it for the sake of seeking truth, so we would get acquainted with the road to Allah. Only then, we would be able to define our place in this road, how much is left, so we would renew our intention and sincere repentance, continue our journey to Allah (*AWJ*), aspiring to win His mercy, paradise, and love, through what we learn from these lines, guided by what is grasped out of it.

May Allah make you one of His good, knowledgeable, close servants, so He would bestow His mercy on us, through you, like He forgave Imam Malik, by virtue of his students crying before him, out of their fear from Allah (*SWT*).

At the end of this introduction, we ask Allah, the Ever-Exalted, the All-Possessor of Power to reward our scholars and teachers the best reward, also all who helped us, even with the slightest effort. May Allah go past any unintentional mistake or errors. May Allah (*SWT*) make it a work that is utterly for His sake, and a reason for people to be guided to Him, His road, His noble Book, and take His noble Prophet (*SAWS*) as a role model, for He (*SAWS*) Is the Excellent-Protector, and Excellent-Helper.

Part One

Introduction to the Straight Path

- The straight path is the shortest and only way to Allah (*AWJ*)
- Guidance to the straight path is two types, one is guidance *to* the straight path, the second is guidance *on* the straight path
- Guidance is a gift from Allah. He saved it to whom He loves of His creatures
- What are the means a servant should use to win Allah's answer to his supplication **“Guide us to the straight path,” (TMQ: 1:6):**
 1. In the phase of guidance *to* the straight path (Knowledge, righteous deeds, patience, and *inaba*)
 2. In the phase of guidance *on* the straight path
- Types of guidance and the needed guidance is Allah's.

Introduction to the Straight Path

The straight path is the road to Allah

The straight path is the shortest and only way to Allah

- *Siratt* (path) derives from the root *sarata*, which means swallowed. The road is called *siratt* when it is straight, so the size of the one moving on it becomes smaller the more the road swallows them.
- “Straight” means there it is no crook in it. The straight line is the shortest line that connects between two points.
- “The straight path” is straight path, in which there is no crook. It is the shortest way, by which one reaches to their destination.
- “The straight path” the word *tareeq* meaning 'path', to which added the two letters *alif* and *laam* as a definite article, meaning 'The'. It is like when someone says, '*al kitab*' the book. When someone asks, 'Which book?', the questioned then would reply, 'the book of so-and-so.' Therefore, defining the book would be through addition of *alif* and *laam*. Accordingly, when we ask the noble Qur'an, 'What is '*al-Sirat al-Mostaqeem*'?' it means 'what is the straight path; that is defined-by adding *alif* and *laam*, the definite article-in al-Fatiha, when we did not read about yet. Then, the answer would be what Allah (*SWT*) says and can be translated as, **“The path of Allah , to whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Unquestionably, to Allah do [all] matters evolve.” (TMQ: 42:53).** The word 'Allah' was added to the word '*al-siratt*', by this we knew that it is the straight path of Allah; the shortest way, through which the servant reaches for Allah, Glorified be He, the All-Glorious. Thus, we understand the importance of the supplication in what can be translated as, **“Guide us to the straight path,” (TMQ, 1:6)** in al-Fatiha. It is the prayer requesting Allah (*AWJ*) to guide him to His path that takes him to His glory, mercy, paradise, and love.
- The noble Qur'an draws our attention to that this path is the only way to Allah. There is but it. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.” (TMQ, 6:153).**
- Ways and paths are numerous, yet there is no way that would make creatures reach for their Creator but the straight path. This is since the very beginning of creation. This is the reason Allah mentions that He guided Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) to the straight path in what can be translated as, **“And We guided them on the straight path.” (TMQ, 37:118).** He, Glorified be He, also says about the last of the prophets, Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*) what can be translated as, **“Indeed, We have given you, [O Muhammad], a clear conquest. That Allah may forgive for you what preceded of your sin and what will follow and complete His favor upon you and guide you to a straight path,” (TMQ, 48:1-2).** He, also, tells His Messenger about his brothers, the preceding prophets what can be translated as, **“Who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided, and those are people of understanding.” (TMQ, 39:18).**

All these *ayat* show that the straight path is not a new way invented by the Messenger Muhammad (*SAWS*). Rather, the straight path has been the only and shortest way to the Creator, The One, The Only One, since the very beginning of creation, and there is but this way. In this way, and throughout history, all messengers walked, calling people to join this

road, and nothing but it. The Prophet, as the last of prophets, came to continue this way, calling Muslims to it. There is but one religion, because there is but One Creator, and One revealer.

From here, we understand what Allah says and can be translated as, **“And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, “There is no deity except Me, so worship Me.”(TMQ, 21:25).** This is the statement all previous prophets repeated to all creatures, throughout time. Their call to people was but one call; to the religion of Allah, that is Islam.

However, what is the relation between Islam and the straight path?

Let us read what Allah says and can be translated as, **“So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam; and whoever He wants to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe, and this is the path of your Lord, [leading] straight. We have detailed the verses for a people who remember.” (TMQ, 6:125-126).**

Thus, we understand that the straight path is the shortest and only way to Allah, which is Islam way. The entrance to this road is to declare that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad (SAWS) is the Messenger of Allah.

Guidance to the Straight Path is two types:

1. Guidance *to* the straight path: asking for the guidance *to* the straight path is a request of guidance from Allah to reach to the entrance of this path. It is the part in which we, humans depend on our intellect and reflection on the universe to reach for the truth that this universe has One Creator, with Whom there is no partners. Then, we would stand at the entrance of Islam-the straight path-, knock the door, walk this way. This is what would help us avoid the great sin of polytheism, which is unforgivable by Allah. He (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.” (TMQ, 4:48).** On the Day of Judgment, Allah (AWJ) gives orders, "Take out of Hell whoever remembered or feared from Me in a situation. People, who believed in Allah as their Lord; Islam as their religion; and Muhammad (SAWS) as a Messenger and a Prophet are not destined to eternity in hellfire.
2. Guidance *on* the straight path: if one uttered *shahada*, entered Islam, they should perform *ghusl* (ritual bathing). They, then, are like being really reborn, for life is the life of souls and hearts. Allah says what can be translated as, **“So have they not traveled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.” (TMQ, 22:48).**

Thus, we as Muslims are aware of the shortest and only way, through which we can reach for our Creator, Glorified be He. Still, we, not only have to walk in it, rather, to race in it towards Allah, Glorified be He, before death takes us by surprise. Therefore, we need to ask Allah (AWJ) to guide us on the right path. We, also, have to seek the proper means for this.

Amazingly, the supplication which we are ordered to say in our prayers when we recite al-Fatiha, “**guide us to the straight path**”-in the Arabic text *'ihdina al-siratt al-mostaqeem'*-He did not separate between the two words *ihdina* meaning 'guide us' and *al-siratt* meaning straight path with any letters like *'elaa'* meaning to or *'alaa'* meaning on. This is to contain the two types of guidance; guidance *to* the straight path, and *on* the straight path.

Here, one might ask, 'if the reciter and the prayer is a Muslim, why would they need the first type of guidance form the first place?

The answer is that faith is an action of the heart. A Muslim could sin, or utter a word-unintentionally- that would drive them out of Islam. Then, they would need this type of guidance.

It was mentioned in the authentic *hadith*¹⁰

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “A man may utter a word that he would never thought it would have reached what it reached [of graveness], so Allah would decree His resentment on him until the day the man meets Allah.”¹¹

The noble Qur'an, also, warns us from dying except as Muslims. It means that it could occur to us, so we have to avoid it. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “**And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Jacob, [saying], “O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.” (TMQ, 2:132).**

The Prophet (SAWS) ordered us to renew our faith, so he said, “Renew your faith. They asked, “O Messenger of Allah, how would we renew our faith? He said, “increase the number of times you say 'There is no god but Allah’”¹²

The Prophet (SAWS) also, told us that at the End of Time, *fitan* (trials) will spread, so he said, “Be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. During (that stormy period) a man would be a Muslim in the morning and an unbeliever in the evening or he would be a believer in the evening and an unbeliever in the morning, and would sell his faith for worldly goods.”¹³

Guidance comes from Allah, Glorified be He. He saved it for whom He loves of His creation:

If we reflected on the verb *ihdina* meaning 'guide us' in the noble Qur'an, we would find it a transitive verb, like what Allah says and can be translated as, “**And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command. You did not know what is the Book or [what is] faith, but We have made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path.**” (TMQ, 42:52).

When we searched the parse of *as-siratt*, we found that it is as a second object, and that *'na'* meaning 'us' is a first object. It caught our attention. We searched for another way of *qira'ah* (a manner of recitation) to we find an irregular *qira'ah* by Ibn-Hazm. He read *Ihdina* to mean

¹⁰ Hadith (plural: Ahadith): The Prophet's actual sayings or actions as narrated by his companions

¹¹ Authentic hadith, reported by Ahmad

¹² Authentic hadith, reported by Ahmad

¹³ Authentic hadith reported by Muslim

'Give us a gift' instead of "Guide us". This verb, in this meaning transfers to two objects, a part from the verb *ihdina*.

Example: Ahmad gave Ali a book. Ali here is the first object; a book is the second object. From here we understand the request for guidance from Allah that it is a request for His guidance as a gift from Him as follows:

1- The gift's giver gives the gift at the time they wish, in the amount they wish. The gift's taker cannot hold the giver responsible for anything. So is guidance; Allah grants His creatures out of His bounty, whenever and however He wishes, for nobody owns it but Allah, accordingly, nobody could grant it but Allah.

Allah says what can be translated as, **"Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided."** (TMQ, 28:56).

Some read the word *tahdee* meaning guide and *yohdee* meaning gives a gift.

2- A gift's giver does not take it back, so is guidance. Allah says what can be translated as, **"And whoever Allah guides - for him there is no misleader. Is not Allah Exalted in Might and Owner of Retribution?"** (TMQ, 39:37).

A gift's worth cannot be valued; because its value rests in that it is a gift itself. Just as the gift is not to be given away (as a gift to another) so is guidance. It is the most precious thing the servant could ever gain in this worldly life. This is the reason Allah ordained for us that we should request it in al-Fatiha 17 times a day. He knew we would neglect asking for it out of our ignorance of its importance. Human is worthless without it. Besides, guidance is not to be taken back after it has been given. The noble Prophet (SAWS), who was guided by Allah, could not guide his uncle Abu-Talib, so he died as a non-Muslim.

3- The gift is given only to whom the giver loves. This is the reason Allah's guidance to the servant implies His love for them. It is a proof that Allah wishes good for them.

Allah saved guidance for certain types of people.

Type One: the Chosen, the ones with great fortune.

Allah says what can be translated as, **"Indeed, Allah chose Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imran over the worlds."**(TMQ, 3:33).

Allah selected some people to be 'the chosen' and guided them. They are the messengers and prophets. He made them guides, who call for the straight path; walk on it, so that people would take them as role model. They are of great fortune.

Allah says what can be translated as, **"But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except one having a great portion [of good]."** (TMQ, 41:35).

They, whom Allah chooses, are the ones with great fortune. They are promised paradise.

Type Two: the ones, who turn repentantly to Allah; the patient

Allah says what can be translates as, **"He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided**

therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him]. (TMQ, 42:13).

The ones who turn repentantly to Allah are the ones who are patient enough to take His road, fight against their desires and lusts. They exert effort; struggle to acquire the means to gain guidance. Moreover, they supplicate, sincerely, in every prayer. Therefore, Allah answers their supplication when He sees their truthfulness, sincerity, so then He would enter them into paradise, with which they have been acquainted by Him.

If we are not of the chosen by Allah (*SWT*), so let us be of the repentant, who turn to Him; the ones who walk on the straight path. How could we achieve it, though?
How could we gain/win guidance *to* or *on* the straight path?

When we-as Allah's servants-wish something from our Lord, we have to do two things:

First: request it from Allah with a repeated, sincere supplication and confidence in Allah's answering to the supplication.

Second: seek the means, by which this wish would be achieved. For example: if the servant wishes Allah cures him from a disease, so they have to strive in sincere supplication. They should visit a doctor, take medicine, and yet be confident that the doctor and the medicine only treat but do not cure. Cure is only in the hands of Allah (*AWJ*), at the predetermined time, so they should not hurry and abandon supplication.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.” (TMQ, 26:80).**

The Prophet (*SAWS*) said, “The servant is still in good state until he hastens. They said, “O Messenger of Allah, how would he hasten?” He (*SAWS*) said, “He says, 'I supplicated my Lord, but my supplications are not answered’¹⁴

Let us apply this to the most important and precious thing the servant needs from Allah, that is guidance:

- 1- Let us, supplicate Allah with such sincerity in and out of every prayer with this supplication, “Guide us to the straight path”.
- 2- Seek the means through which we would gain this guidance.

What are the means the servant should seek to win Allah's answering to his supplication “Guide us to the straight path”?

These means were explained in some verses. It could be summarized as follows:

- 1- Seeking knowledge, to recognize the straight path, so that they would not act ignorantly, for then we would go astray.
- 2- Making use of the acquired knowledge. After Allah Has illuminated our way *to* and *on* the straight path by the knowledge of the Qur'an and *sunnah*, we should move on the path, approaching Allah, turning to Him, and practice what we learned.
- 3- Patience for whatever distained and all what the servant face in their road to Allah, such as tiredness, fatigue, tries, hurt and, unjust people might do to them.

¹⁴ Authentic hadith, reported by Ahmad.

- 4- *Inaba* to Allah (repentance and returning to Allah) right after every sin that takes us away from the road. If Satan defied or led us astray from the road of Allah, we should hasten to turn to Him. We should pull ourselves together, be more powerful, and repent to Allah, for he whoever repents their sin, is like the one who did not sin [Allah erases their sins]. Allah forgives all sins. Even more, He transforms it to good deeds for the repentant. Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and those who purify themselves. We should always remember that no matter how grave our sins are, yet it would never surpass the mercy of Allah. No matter how many our sins are, it would never cross the boundaries of the forbearance of Allah. He, Exalted be He, does not benefit from good deeds, neither harmed by bad deeds.

In this ayah, which can be translated as, **“Guide us to the straight path - The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.”** (TMQ, 1:6-7). **“those who have evoked [Your] anger”** are the Jews, because they acquired knowledge, yet they did not practice this knowledge. **“Those who are astray”** are the Christians, for they went astray because they practiced without prior knowledge.

Thus, we reach to that whoever wants guidance, has to supplicate Allah to guide them to the right path, then seek the means, through which they reach for this guidance. They can be summarized in four points: knowledge, endeavor, patience, and returning to Allah repentantly.

- 1- Acquiring knowledge of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*
- 2- Doing righteousness deeds that is founded on knowledge and sincerity
- 3- Showing patience for Allah's decree
- 4- Repentance and returning to Allah, after going astray from Him, being heedless, or sinning

Do the means sought to acquire guidance change in each phase?

Phase One: Guidance to the right path (Islam)

- 1- Knowledge: the knowledge that each human should seek to reach for the road of truth is any knowledge, through which, one would be acquainted with themselves, and everything around them of Allah's creatures. (i.e.: human, animal, plant, and inanimate objects). The first order revealed [in the Qur'an] to the Prophet (*SAWS*) was *'Iqra'* (recite). It is a call for acquiring knowledge. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“ Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], “Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.”** (TMQ, 3:190-191).
- 2- Making use of acquired knowledge: it is using the mind to be acquainted with facts through reflection to find answers for the following questions:
 - a. Does this universe, with all that it contains, have a creator?
 - b. Is it possible that there could be more than one creator?
 - c. Who is this creator?
 - d. Why did he create this universe?
- 3- Patience for avoiding lusts and distractions that would turn them away from searching for the road to Allah. They should be patient for acquiring knowledge, making time for contemplation, and not let the worldly life distract them by its distractions and lusts.
- 4- *Inaba* to the Creator right after any action that distracts us from searching for the road of facts. The servant may slip in lusts; indulge in pleasures such as collecting money, kids,

or any other way that hinders them from reaching for the truth. However, in this phase man needs to reach for answers to the former questions the soonest they can; before they die. Their souls need those answers more than their body need oxygen to survive. It is even a duty towards the intellect to know the reason of our life. How would we live, while we do not know how we live?

When man wastes his time indulging in lusts and pleasures without a serious, diligent, and sincere striving to reach for an answer to those questions, then comes the time in which they should turn to search for Allah, themselves. It is something that cannot be neglected.

Let us take an example so that the reader would understand what we mean: let us say that you are travelling in the desert. You have no money, food, anything to ride, nor family. You looked for food, or drink, because death is creeping unto you. However, you completely lost hope, gave in to death; there is no chance to find food or water. Unconsciousness is creeping unto you until you feel you have already left this life. You think you have died. All of a sudden, however, your eyes open, your breath is back, and right before you there is a table on top of it all kinds of food and beverages. This is taking place amidst such a desolate dessert.

What would you do then? Most likely you would approach that table in such ravenousness and happiness so you can extinguish your thirst and nourish your hungry body. However, are you not supposed to ask first a very important question that you should have asked before you start eating or drinking; that is: Who brought this food and beverage in such a desolate dessert? If the one who brought you this food is an enemy, you would not eat, fearing that it might be harmful. If it was brought by a friend, you would thank them; ask about its price, even before you eat it. However, it very unlikely that a sane human being, whether intentionally or unintentionally, would eat and drink before they ask about who provided this food.

It might be acceptable, only from a beast, which is moved by its uncontrollable desires. It cares for nothing but having food to eat and water to drink. Exactly like the human, who, on some day, was not a thing even mentioned, then he found himself in this life, having a body, two eyes, two lips, two hands, two legs, an intellect, a universe dedicated to serve him, with all its plants, animals, solids, even the sun. It does not shine but for him. The night does not fall, but to rest in. Even the stars were created, so he would learn the number of years and count of time. Blessings are countless. After the human being enjoyed all these blessings, should he not strive to find answers to know these facts? Should he not abandon procrastination? Or else, death would take him by surprise amidst his heedlessness. Then, he would lose his worldly life and the Hereafter, altogether. The mercy of Allah (*SWT*), however, has encompassed everything and everyone that believes in Him. Therefore, how could a servant deny the existence of Allah? How could he not dedicate part of his mind and life to think, contemplate, learn, and be the human, whom Allah honored with a sane mind?

How would Allah forgive a servant, who does not ask for His forgiveness? How would Allah enter a servant His paradise, when the servant does not want or, even ask for it in the first place? Here came the importance of the servant hastening to use their mind, to reach for Allah The One, and The Only One through reflection and contemplation. Not using our mind, sight, and hearing would be an unforgiveable sin. For then, we would be more of a beast than a human; a beast that does not care but for satisfying its desires. As for the soul, it is completely neglected.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed in that is a reminder for whoever has a heart or who listens while he is present [in mind].”** (TMQ, 50:37).

He also says what can be translated as, **“So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam; and whoever He wants to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe.”** (TMQ, 6:125).

Phase Two: Guidance *on* the Straight Path

In this phase, the means a Muslim seeks to obtain Allah's answering to their supplication “Guide us to the straight path” are of new dimensions. In this phase a Muslim strives to get closer to their Creator, Exalted and Lofty be He. They should execute His orders and avoid His prohibitions.

A- Seeking [Religious] Knowledge:

The main source of knowledge is the Qur'an and the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAWS). The Prophet (SAWS) said, “I am leaving among you what if you hold on to, you would never go astray. One of them is greater than the other; the Book of Allah. It is a rope stretched out from the Heavens to the Earth. Two is my offspring, and household. These two things will never be apart until they approach the *hawd* (Tank: the river of al-Kawthar in Paradise), so look how you would treat them after I am gone.”¹⁵

As Muslims, we should seek knowledge constantly. One is considered knowledgeable for as long as they are seeking knowledge. If one thinks they are knowledgeable, then they are ignorant. Knowledge is like a lamp, or a light, carried by the pursuer in the path of Allah to illuminate their way, so they would see before them and not stumble in the darkness of ignorance. Seeking knowledge is an obligation on every Muslim, male or female. Whoever worships Allah, when they are ignorant, it is as if they disobeyed Him. Allah (AWJ) warned us of being like the nation that worked but without knowledge, so it went astray.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “He who takes a path, in which he seeks knowledge, Allah would take him to a path leading to Paradise.”¹⁶

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrating and standing [in prayer], fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, “Are those who know equal to those who do not know?” Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding.”** (TMQ, 39:9)

He (SWT) also says, **“And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.”** (TMQ, 35:28).

He (SWT) also says, **“Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not.”** (TMQ, 96:1-5).

¹⁵ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

¹⁶ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

When Allah wanted to create a vicegerent on the Earth, the angels objected it. They were afraid of him causing corruption. Allah told them that He knows what they do not know. He taught Adam all of the names. Thus, Adam is distinguished by knowledge, and because of it, Allah made the angels prostrate before Adam.

If you wish, read what Allah (SWT) says in *surat al-Baqarah* (The Cow) what can be translated as, **“And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, “Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.” They said, “Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?” Allah said, “Indeed, I know that which you do not know. And He taught Adam the names - all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, “Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful. They said, “Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise.” “O Adam, inform them of their names.” And when he had informed them of their names, He said, “Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed.” (TMQ, 2:30-33).**

Seeking knowledge is the only way for human to be Allah's vicegerent on the Earth, so that he would make it whole and sound. Otherwise, he would be like the deaf and the blind, who stumble, with his ignorance, so everything in his hands becomes corrupted.

It is mentioned in the noble Qur'an that the result of the knowledge the Qur'an and the *suannah* would be the righteous deed.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds - they will have the Gardens of Paradise as a lodging,” (TMQ, 18:107).**

You will also notice that the word 'believed' was followed by the word 'done righteous deeds' in such many places in the Qur'an. It means that the origin of the righteous deed is faith in Allah, the desire to obey Him in all that He ordered. It is called 'righteous deed' because it makes the universe 'right'. This is the role of Allah's vicegerent on the Earth. This is the reason Allah created man on the earth to inhabit and construct it; amend what is corrupted, and keep what is right as it is. Also, to fight corruption, unjust, oppression in all its forms, so that all people would live securely. Their lives, properties, and children would all be secured. They would live in peace with their Lord, selves, and all other creatures as well.

It is important to refer one more time to the significance of self-purification before acquiring knowledge and working with it. The *nafs* (self) should be good in itself, so that it would be able to do the righteous deeds, with which it could reform others. Without the goodness of the *nafs*, there would be no way for reform, for it is the doer. This is why faith should precede righteous deeds. Faith is a sign for the goodness of the self, and its capability of doing good deeds.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“The bedouins say, “We have believed.” Say, “You have not [yet] believed; but say [instead], 'We have submitted,' for faith has not yet entered your hearts. And if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not deprive you from your deeds of anything. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (TMQ, 49:14).**

Allah (SWT) also, says to His messengers what can be translated as, “[Allah said], **“O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Indeed, I, of what you do, am Knowing.”**”(TMQ, 23:51).

Scholars reflected on this *ayah* to show that there is essential work that should be done between acquiring faith and doing the righteous deeds; that is to eat from the good foods. It means that a Muslim's sustenance should be *halal* (lawful). A faithful cannot do righteous deeds, when they are gaining their money, which they spend on food, drink, clothing, and family through unlawful means. How could a thief give charity, perform *Umra* (minor pilgrimage), or *hajj* when their money is unlawful. It would have been better if they did not steal or give charity, for Allah is Good. He does not accept but good.

The legislative rule shows that avoidance of harm takes priority over bringing of benefit. It is important to clear that money, being lawful or unlawful, depends on the means by which a Muslim gains it. If the means are lawful, so the money is lawful, regardless of the lawfulness of its origins.

Example: if an engineer built a house for a client. After he received his pay, he found that his client is a thief; he earns his money by stealing from people. Is the engineer's pay lawful or unlawful?

The answer is that money was unlawful when it was with the thief. He gained it through illegal means. However, when it became in the possession of the engineer, it became lawful, for it was gained through a legal means.

Means is all that counts when it comes to the lawfulness or the unlawfulness of the money. Strictness in seeking undoubtedly lawful sustenance is a sign of piety. If a Muslim doubts its origin, they should abandon it.

The Prophet (SAWS) says, “The flesh that grows of unlawful means, is worthy of Hellfire.”

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded.”** (TMQ, 66:6).

A female companion used to say to her husband before he leaves everyday for work, “O servant of Allah, fear from Allah and never bring us unlawful sustenance. We can endure hunger in this worldly life, but we can never endure the hellfire on the Day of Judgment.”

We, Muslims, should be careful not to eat from the food of others whom we may suspect the lawfulness of their money. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Do not befriend but a believer, and your food is not to be eaten but by a pious.”

In accordance to the above mentioned, eating the good food, being strict when seeking pure, lawful, undoubted, sustenance is of such important significance. It is the first of the righteous deeds the Muslim strives for, before they consider embarking on any other deed, by which he seeks pleasing Allah, Sublimed and Exalted be He.

Dear reader, you should not forget that the righteous deed is a proof of and evidence on faith, thankfulness, and patience. It is the means by which a human expresses what is in his heart,

good or evil. The container emits what it contains. If it contains good, good would be manifested on the servant's limbs and behavior. If it contains evil, evil would be manifested on the servant's limbs and behavior as well. The first limb to manifest such a thing is the tongue. The tongue shows the purity and cleanliness of the human's heart, through what the tongue utters. The tongue is the ladle of the heart. This is the reason the noble Qur'an mentioned the verb 'they *said*' many times.

One's intention is better than their deeds:

When we, Muslims, learn something, we should set our intention to practice what we learned. If our intention is good, yet we did not apply what we learned, then a single good deed would be recorded. If we applied what we learned, then ten good deeds would be recorded. On the other hand, if we intended evil, and did not do it because of awakened conscience, a single good deed would be recorded. If we did evil, a single bad deed would be recorded.

Seeking knowledge occurs through various means such as books and tapes [multimedia]. However, what is more important is the methodology of acquiring knowledge. It is of significance to have a teacher, or *sheikh* to be followed and learned from. It does not contradict with him acquiring knowledge from others-than his teacher-too. It is conditioned that this *sheikh* or teacher is not paid in return for what he teaches. This is like what the prophets used to say to their people, "We do not ask you for a payment for this message."

It is worth mentioning that seeking knowledge should be focused on the Book of Allah, Exalted be He, Who guaranteed preserving it, so falsehood cannot approach it from before or behind it. It is sent as a clarification for all things, and in detail explanation for all things. Add to it, acquiring the knowledge of the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAWS).

Allah is truthful as He says in what can be translated as, **"And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you. We have not neglected in the Register a thing. Then unto their Lord they will be gathered."**(TMQ, 6:38)

Allah clarified everything and, detailed everything. Then came the honored *sunnah* as an interpretation, explanation, and application to what is unclear, needs more clarification, or detailing. The learner would then know that all our revered scholars had derived all the Islamic sciences from the Book of Allah, and the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAWS). Imam Malik Ibn-Anas, the Imam of the Abode of Emigration, used to say, 'Anyone's talk could be accepted or rejected except the inhabitant of this grave [means the Prophet (SAWS)].'

A learner should know that religious knowledge comes through adopting the authentic views of scholars not bringing forward novelty. Every saying in knowledge should be founded on the Book and *sunnah*.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"Certainly did Allah confer [great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error."** (TMQ, 3:164).

He also says, by the tongue of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) (Abraham), what can be translated as, **"Our Lord, and send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them**

Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise.” (TMQ, 2:129).

From the last two *ayah* we notice the following:

- 1- The best type of *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) is the recitation of the noble Qur'an. The first of it is *La Ilaha Ella Allah* (There is no god to be worshiped but Allah). The most blessing *dhikr* is by saying *al-Hamdulelah Rabb al-'Alameen* ([All] praise is [due] to Allah). Acquiring knowledge is always preceded by reciting the noble Qur'an, even if it is not comprehended [by some people]. It is a matter of devoutness, whose aim is to purify, develop, and prepare the *nafs* before acquiring knowledge. The container should, first, be cleaned before putting the milk in it; otherwise, the milk would be spoiled. Therefore, a heart should be pure; the *nafs* should be developed before acquiring knowledge.
- 2- We can notice the difference in the order [in both *ayah*]. In the second *ayah*, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) thought that the guidance comes through the following order [of phases]: reciting *ayat*, learning the signs [in the universe] and wisdom, and then occurs the purification of the *nafs*. However, Allah, in the first *ayah*, corrected that order. He taught him that purification of *nafs* occurs to the Muslim when he recites the Qur'an, even if not comprehended. Then, after hearts become prepared for receiving the light of Allah's Book and the Prophet's (SAWS) *sunnah*, the Muslim learns the Book and wisdom. Thus, self purification comes after reciting the Qur'an, and before receiving knowledge.

Accordingly, we can attain the following:

- 1- The Muslim should seek knowledge through the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAWS), along with their explanatory references.
- 2- The first knowledge to be acquired are the ones, through which a Muslim learns *dhikr*, such as, learning the Qur'an recitation. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it - it is they who are the losers.” (TMQ, 2:121).** Learning all types of *dhikr*, for Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance. And exalt Him morning and afternoon. It is He who confers blessing upon you, and His angels [ask Him to do so] that He may bring you out from darkneses into the light. And ever is He, to the believers, Merciful.” (TMQ, 33:41-43).** Learn how to pray, and everything related to it because it is the way to prepare the hearts to receive knowledge, which is a means of self purification.
- 3- Walking in the path of Allah, lacking knowledge, is like walking in a dark path, without an illuminating lamp. There is no way to go ahead in this path. Besides, whoever worships Allah ignorantly is as if he disobeyed Him.
- 4- A Muslim should follow the priorities of gaining different types of knowledge contained in the Book of Allah, for the Book has three aims:
 - a- *Tawheed* (Oneness of Allah). Introduction to Allah, His attributes, actions, and names.
 - b- Stories. Introduction to the unseen that is an essential part of the believer's creed.
 - c- Rules, legislatives, orders, and prohibitions; that is the body's actions.

B- Applying what has been learned

Every learner should know that knowledge is worthless unless it is applied. Otherwise, knowledge then would be an argument against them. Allah's wrath was drawn down on the Jews because they did not apply what they had learned. They even said, "We hear and disobey". While, the straight path is founded on applying what has been learned, then teaching it to others as well.

It is worth mentioning that we, Muslims, should be a role model in all that we tell others to do.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?"** (TMQ, 2:44).

Whoever does not apply what he learns, is like the one who holds a lamp, which illuminates his way, but he did not move, nor benefit from this light. To the contrary, he just stuck to what he used to be. He is like that of a donkey that carries volumes of books. The donkey does not gain from the books but their heavy weight on its back. It does not benefit from the valuable sciences inside them.

Therefore, it is important to warn against gaining knowledge and not applying it. For then, it would be a trial to the gainer. One might be a reciter of the Qur'an and yet the Qur'an curses him. Seeking knowledge for mere knowledge is the first step towards going astray. The happiness that the knowledgeable person feels because of his knowledge might be the very reason he would be the fuel of Hell on the Day of Judgment. This occurs when they learn what they learn, so that others would say "He is a knowledgeable person."

Therefore, we have to make sure that knowledge should always be the Muslim's means to the good deed, about which Allah (AWJ) would be pleased. It is free from *shirk* (association others with Allah) and *nifaq* (hypocrisy). This is why the Prophet (SAWS) said, "Verily Allah does not look to your faces and your wealth but He looks to your heart and to your deeds."¹⁷

Allah looks to the heart because it is the place of creed, intention, sincerity, and the following to *shari'a* (law of Allah).

Any good deed, to be accepted from Allah, should have the following conditions:

- 1- Its doer should be a believer. They are doing this work in compliance with what Allah ordered and seeking His *thawab* (reward), not because they are convinced with the order. In other words, they are doing so out of faith and then seeking reward from Allah is like what the Prophet (SAWS) said, "..., and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven."¹⁸ The doer's food, clothing, and sustenance source should be legitimate.
- 2- This work should be completely for the sake of Allah (SWT), and Allah alone; not for anybody else. Allah (SWT) says in *hadith qudsi*¹⁹, "I am the One Partner who is not in need of any partner. If anyone does anything in which he associates anyone else with Me, I shall abandon him with that one whom he associates with Me."²⁰ Intention and

¹⁷ Authentic hadith, reported by Muslim

¹⁸ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhari.

¹⁹ The words of Allah, repeated by Muhammad (SAWS) and recorded on the condition of an isnad (chain of verification by witness(es) who heard Prophet Muhammad say the hadith).

²⁰ Authentic hadith reported by Muslim.

turning should, completely be to Allah only. Association is like ink, if a drop fell in milk, it spoils it.

- 3- This work should be in accordance with the Book of Allah and the *sunnah* of His Prophet (SAWS). It is unacceptable from a Muslim to pray *fajr* (dawn) four *rak'a* (a unite of prayer) for example. Adding to the religion [what is not in it] is just as taking away from it. There is no way to add an action unless there is a stipulated text. For example, *wudu'* (ablution), there is nothing about performing the ritual ablution properly, so the one performing *wudu'* would exceed in his washing to the organ than what is stipulated in the Qur'an because there is a *hadith* of the Prophet (SAWS), in which he said, "In a believer, adornment would reach the places where ablution reaches."²¹ The Prophet (SAWS) said, "My people would come with bright faces and bright hands and feet on account of the marks of ablution, so he who can increase the luster of his forehead (and that of his hands and legs) should do so."²²
- 4- Abandonment comes before adornment. We, Muslims, should first abandon committing sins and immoralities, what is apparent of them and what is concealed, before we strive in performing *nawafil* (optional acts of worship). We should, first, avoid what Allah ordered us to avoid, before we exert effort to come closer to Allah. We should avoid what causes the anger of Allah, before we seek His mercy and love.
- 5- *Nawafal* are not accepted until *fara'id* (obligatory acts of worships) are fulfilled. For example, if a Muslim wants to pray *sobh* (morning) after sunrise, he should pray the *fard* (obligatory prayer) first, then the *nafileh* (optional). This is different if he prayed *sobh* before sunrise. Then he would pray *sunnah* first, then *faridah*.
- 6- The doer should be free-willed, discriminating, adult, and sane. Allah Has excused the *Ummah* (nation) for doing [unintentional] mistakes. It means that any action that is done unintentionally, forgetfully, or with compulsion is forgivable. However, ignorance is not forgivable. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, "**He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah . But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.**" (TMQ, 2:173). He also says what can be translated as, "**Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief... except for one who is forced [to renounce his religion] while his heart is secure in faith. But those who [willingly] open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah, and for them is a great punishment,**" (TMQ, 16:106).

C- Showing patience for what Allah decrees while walking *on* the straight path:

Patience is half of one's faith. Fasting is half of patience. Patience means:

- 1- Patience for seeking knowledge
- 2- Patience for doing righteous deeds that is based on knowledge. (Perseverance on doing righteous deeds, and patience for avoiding sins).
- 3- Patience for people's harm.
- 4- Patience for all that Allah decrees on His servant.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, "**And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient,**" (TMQ, 2:155).

²¹ Authentic hadith reported by Muslim.

²² Authentic hadith reported by Muslim.

There is a well-known phrase that says, 'Be patient for everything that you hasten and yet postponed by Allah (*SWT*); and everything you wished to be postponed and yet He hastened it for you.' It means let your desire be in conformity with what Allah desires.

The Prophet (*SAWS*) said, “Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks Allah, thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it.”²³

Allah (*SWT*) stipulates that the reward for being patient is entering paradise without being asked about their deeds.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**Say, “O My servants who have believed, fear your Lord. For those who do good in this world is good, and the earth of Allah is spacious. Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.”** (TMQ, 39:10).

Omar Ibnul-Khattab, whenever he was afflicted, he used to say, “I praise Allah for three things, one, that it is in an affliction in worldly issues and not in religion. Two, that it was not worse than what it is. Three, that Allah saved me my reward until the Day of Judgment.”

The servant is most close to the company of Allah in the times of patience.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**And be patient, [O Muhammad], for the decision of your Lord, for indeed, you are in Our eyes. And exalt [Allah] with praise of your Lord when you arise.**” (TMQ, 52:48).

Affliction occurs so that the servant would ascend in his way to Allah. It is his gates to the straight path. Whenever the servant wants to go through one gate to come closer to Allah-Allah would try him and afflict him. If he showed patience, he would go through the gate, and gain the closeness to Allah. Therefore, the most afflicted people are the best [in qualities]²⁴ and then the lesser, successively.

In the times of hardship and distress, the Muslim learns the pure worship. The honest would ask for help by saying, “**It is You we worship and You we ask for help.**” Supplication is never sincere and whole-heartedly but in the times of distress and affliction.

Showing patience, and striving in the road of Allah-the straight path- shows the servant's contentment with Allah's Decree. If He granted him, he would thank Him. If He took away from him, he would show patience, and not wish for other than Allah being pleased with him. A servant can never be contented with Allah, unless Allah (*SWT*) is contented with the servant. As much contentment the servant feels towards his Lord, as much contentment his Lord would be with him. “**Allah being pleased with them, and they with Him.**” (TMQ, 5:119).

Allah (*SWT*), in His Book, proved His love for the patient by saying what can be translated as, “**And Allah loves the steadfast**” (TMQ, 3:146). There is no other way for anybody to enter paradise unless they are tried and showed patience for the trial.

²³ Authentic hadith, reported by Muslim.

²⁴ The best people of qualities such as Prophet and Messengers.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except one having a great portion [of good].”** (TMQ, 41:35). He also says, **“Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, “When is the help of Allah?” Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near.”** (TMQ, 2:214).

The way to Allah is full of hardships, while the way to Hell is full of temptations. We, Muslims, should resort to patience and prayers. Patience is acquirable by practice. Therefore, all prophets used to ask Allah to pour patience upon them.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And when they went forth to [face] Goliath and his soldiers, they said, “Our Lord, pour upon us patience and plant firmly our feet and give us victory over the disbelieving people.”** (TMQ, 2:250).

Allah (AWJ) bounds fast the heart of the afflicted so they would show patience. He did the same with the mother of Musa (AS) and the People of Kahf (People of the Cave). Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And the heart of Moses' mother became empty [of all else]. She was about to disclose [the matter concerning] him had We not bound fast her heart that she would be of the believers.”** (TMQ, 28:10). He also says, **“And We made firm their hearts when they stood up and said, “Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never will we invoke besides Him any deity. We would have certainly spoken, then, an excessive transgression.”** (TMQ, 18:14).

In the time of affliction, we, Muslims, should seek the help of Allah. Supplicate Him by His name, *as-Saboor* (the All-Patient). Ask Him to bind fast our hearts. Hasten to say, “Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return. O Allah, reward me for my affliction, and give me something better than it.”

The Prophet (SAWS), our Imam to the straight path, suffered all types of affliction, such as, insults, slanders, false allegations. The hypocrites schemed against him. Disbelievers harmed him; his honor, regarding his most beloved wife in the incident of *ifk* (falsehood). He was afflicted with sickness, fever, loss of children, so all his children died during his lifetime, but for Lady Fatima al-Zahra'. Two of his wives plotted with each other [in the incident of honey]²⁵. However, his reaction to all this was but showing patience that is not mixed with complains. He, even said, “Who feels his affliction is severe, let him remember his affliction of having lost me.”

When the messengers were afflicted, out of *adab* (politeness), they did not ask Allah to remove the affliction from them. Here is Dhan-Nun²⁶ (AS) when he was inside the whale, he was supplicating Allah, saying, “There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.” Ayyub (AS) (Job), also, during his sickness, he used to

²⁵ The Prophet (SAWS) used to stay for a long while with his wife, Zainab bint Jahsh and drink honey at her house. So Lady Hafsa and Lady Aisha decided that if the Prophet came to anyone of them, she should say to him, "I detect the smell of *Maghafir* (a nasty smelling gum) in you. Have you eaten *Maghafir*?" So the Prophet visited one of them and she said to him similarly. The Prophet said, "Never mind, I have taken some honey at the house of Zainab bint Jahsh, but I shall never drink of it anymore." So there was revealed: 'O Prophet ! Why do you ban (for you) that which Allah has made lawful for you? If you two (wives of Prophet) turn in repentance to Allah,' addressing 'Aisha and Hafsa.

²⁶ Yunus (AS) (Jonah)

supplicate Allah by saying, “Indeed, adversity has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful.” They feel shy of asking Allah a specific thing, for His knowledge of their condition/state suffices. They entrust their affairs to their Lord, so that He would choose the best for them. “O Allah, choose for me, and choose the best for me wherever it is, and them make content with it”

D- Repentance to Allah when walking on the straight path

1. Repentance to Allah after committing sins: deviation and committing sins will definitely occur. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Had you not committed sins, Allah would have brought into existence a creation that would have committed sin (and Allah) would have forgiven them.”²⁷ Allah (AWJ) knows that the Muslim would deviate from his way. However, a Muslim’s superiority is measured by the speed of their repentance and turning back to the way of Allah, through *istighfar* (asking for forgiveness), and sincere repentance. Allah says what can be translated as, **“The repentance accepted by Allah is only for those who do wrong in ignorance [or carelessness] and then repent soon after. It is those to whom Allah will turn in forgiveness, and Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.”** (TMQ, 4:17). He also, says, **“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous”** (TMQ, 3:133). He proved His love, Exalted and Sublime be He, for those who are constantly repentant and those who purify themselves. He says what can be translated as, **“And they ask you about menstruation. Say, “It is harm, so keep away from wives during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves, then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you. Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.”** (TMQ, 2:222).

He, even, proved His love, Exalted and Sublime be He, for those who purify themselves and who love to purify themselves in what can be translated as, **“Do not stand [for prayer] within it - ever. A mosque founded on righteousness from the first day is more worthy for you to stand in. Within it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves.”** (TMQ, 9:108).

Sin is like dirt that may cover the garment. We should hasten to remove it. Otherwise it would stick to the garment and become hard to clean. Sin is the soul's dirt. If it increased, the heart would be covered with its blackness, and blocked from the light of Allah. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning. No! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be partitioned.”** (TMQ, 83:14-15).

One of the most fatal sins is not only the slackness in seeking guidance from Allah, but also slackness in supplicating Allah to grant us guidance. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “Guide us to the straight path.” Whoever indulges in his worldly life, desires, spouses, children, and work, he should wake up of his heedlessness before death takes him by surprise. He should hold himself responsible for it, before he is held responsible for it. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, [O Muhammad], “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.”**(TMQ, 9:24).

²⁷ Authentic hadith, reported by Muslim.

He (SWT) also, says **“O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from remembrance of Allah. And whoever does that - then those are the losers.” (TMQ, 63:9).**

Returning repentantly to Allah has some pre-requirements, the most important of them are:

- Deep remorse for the sin and violation. It would be like those who reached to the point that the earth closed in on them in spite of its vastness and their souls confined them and they were certain that there is no refuge from Allah except in Him.
- Abandoning it, instantly, without the least of hesitation.
- Being determined never to recommit it. Hating it as they hate being thrown into the Hell.
- Paying back people's rights, and clear themselves from the people they have been unjust to.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, 'Be on your guard against committing oppression, for oppression is darkness on the Day of Resurrection,'²⁸

It is important to refer to the point that the sins that most take us away from Allah are those in which we are unjust to human, animal, or any creature. It is because this is a corruption on the Earth. Then, followed by the ones, in which we, Muslims are being unjust to ourselves only. It is because this corrupts the goodness of the *nafs*, so it became blocked from its Lord; unable to do good. Grave sins were also called destructive sins.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into Paradise].”(TMQ, 4:31).**

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Avoid the seven great destructive sins.” The people enquire, “O Allah's Messenger! What are they?” He said, “To join others in worship along with Allah, to practice sorcery, to kill the life which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause, (according to Islamic law), to eat up *riba* (usury), to eat up an orphan's wealth, to flee from the battlefield at the time of fighting, and to accuse, chaste women, who never even think of anything touching chastity and are good believers.”²⁹

This type of sins, as we notice, are of the type, which others are being unjust to and the Earth is being corrupted. Therefore, it is deemed as destructive and major sins.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Five prayers and one Friday prayer to (the next) Friday prayer are expiations (for the sins committed in the intervals) between them.”³⁰

We should know that there is no major sin, when there is *isighfar* (asking Allah's forgiveness), and no minor sin, when there is *israr* (persistence). Being persistent on committing sins, no matter how minor it is, would make it a grave sin. If the doer considered what has been prohibited by Allah as lawful, so he has violated the *shari'a*. However, Allah's mercy is so vast that it encompassed everything. He accepts repentance, no matter what the sin is, as long as the servant is not persistent on committing it.

²⁸ Authentic hadith, reported by Muslim.

²⁹ Authentic hadith, reported by al-Bukhary.

³⁰ Authentic hadith, reported by Muslim.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (TMQ, 39:53).**

The greatest sin of all, is when the servant thinks that his sin is greater than to be forgiven by Allah.

2- ***Inaba*** to Allah, in everything and ahead of all works (seeking the help of Allah) **(It is You we worship and You we ask for help.)**

It was mentioned in the *hadith* that the Prophet (SAWS) said, “Every issue of significance that is not begun with the Name of Allah is not blessed.” It means that we, Muslims should begin every work with the name of Allah, praising Him, and seeking refuge in Allah from the cursed Satan, so that he would not to share our work, sustenance or spouse. This is the meaning of a blessing. If one enters his house, mentioned Allah at the entrance, before eating, Satan would say, “You have no lodging here, neither dinner.” The work that begins with the mentioning of Allah, keeps Satan away from it. Consequently, it is blessed. As for the heedless, Satan shares them everything they do not begin with the name of Allah. Thus, blessings are removed from it.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And incite [to senselessness] whoever you can among them with your voice and assault them with your horses and foot soldiers and become a partner in their wealth and their children and promise them.” But Satan does not promise them except delusion.” TMQ, 17:64).**

A man, if he wants to have sexual intercourse with his wife, he should say, “In the name of Allah. O Allah keep the devil away from us and keep the devil away from what you have blessed us with.” This way, Satan would not be a partner while he is having intercourse with his wife. If they are blessed with a child, as a result of this relation, Satan would not approach him. Thus, this offspring is blessed, for Satan has no share in it.

Here comes the importance of learning *dhikr*, whether conditioned or non-conditioned.

- Conditioned *dhikr* is that, which the noble Prophet (SAWS) taught us to say before and after performing certain actions. Example: *dhikr* (remembrance) upon eating
 - Before the meal: “In the name of Allah. O Allah, bless what you provided us with, and provide us with better than it, and protect us from Hellfire.”
 - After the meal: “All praise is due to Allah, who fed, provided with water, and made us Muslims.”
- Non-conditioned *dhikr*: it is the supplications that are not conditioned to a certain time or action, yet there are preferable times for it to be said.

Example:

- Saying prayers for the Prophet (SAWS) - the best day is Friday.
- *Istighfar* (Asking for Allah's forgiveness) - the best time is before dawn.
- *Tasbeeh*³¹, *tahleel*³², and *takbeer*³³ - the best time is before sunrise and sunset.

It is most preferable to be acquainted with the legitimacy of each action before we act. There are five rules:

1- *Fard*: obligatory action

³¹ Tasbeeh: saying: Sobhan Allah (Glorified be Allah)

³² Tahleel: saying: La ilaha ella Allah (There is no god but Allah)

³³ Takbeer: saying: Allahu akbar (Allah Is the Greatest)

- 2- *Sunnah*: optional action
- 3- *Mobaah*: lawful
- 4- *Makrooh*: reprehensible
- 5- *Haram*: unlawful

If the action you want to perform is *fard* or *sunnah*, you would approach it, adjust your intention and ask Allah (*AWJ*) to accept it from you. If it is undesirable or unlawful, you should, immediately, avoid, and abandon it, so that you would not be following the footsteps of the devil.

Obligatory and optional acts are acts of absolute good that amend the Muslim's self and reform the society. As for the undesirable or the unlawful, they are acts of absolute evil. It corrupts the society, so it has to be abandoned.

As for the lawful actions, it is neither absolute good, nor absolute evil. Difference in opinions about it is permissible. All opinions are right but with a probability of being wrong, or they are wrong but with a probability of being right. Therefore, we should not be inflexible about it and impose some opinions over the others. The permissible could be good for someone and yet bad for the other. It might be good for them in a certain time, and bad in another time. Therefore, consultancy and prayer for guidance is essential. If you are determined, so entrust in Allah, ask Him to grant you success, direct you well, and bring good out of this action; good for yourself and for the people in this life and the Hereafter.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error.”** (TMQ, 33:36).

The Prophet (*SAWS*) said, “None of you is a believer until his desire is in conformity with what I endowed.”³⁴

This is why *istikharah* is legitimate when it is done regarding everything that is permissible.

The Prophet (*SAWS*) used to teach us the way of doing *Istikhara*, in all matters as he taught us the *sura* of the Quran. He said, “If anyone of you thinks of doing any job he should offer a two-rakaa prayer other than the compulsory ones and say (after the prayer), '*Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi'ilmika, Wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, Wa as'alaka min fadlika al-'azlm fa-innaka taqdiru Wala aqdiru, Wa ta'lamu Wala a'lamu, Wa anta 'allamu l-ghuyub. Allahumma, in kunta ta'lam anna hadha-l-amra Khairun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'aqibati amri (or 'ajili amri wa'ajilihi) Faqdirhu wa yas-sirhu li thumma barik li Fihi, Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha-lamra shar-run li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'aqibati amri (or fi'ajili amri wa ajilihi) Fasrifhu anni was-rifni anhu. Waqdir li al-khaira haithu kana Thumma raddini bihi'* [O Allah! I ask guidance from Your knowledge, and Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that this (the person mentions his need) is good for my religion and my subsistence and in my Hereafter, then You ordain it for me and make it easy for me to get, and then bless me in it. And if You know that this (the person mentions his need) is harmful to me in my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter, then keep it away

³⁴ Authentic and good hadith, reported by al-Nawawy in 'al-Arba'oon al-Nawaweyah', The Forty Hadith of Nawawy.

from me and let me be away from it. Ordain for me whatever is good for me, and make me satisfied with it]. The Prophet added that then the person should name (mention) his need.”³⁵

The companions said that the Prophet (SAWS) taught them *istikharah*, as he was teaching them the noble Qur'an. Therefore, it is necessary to stick to the text of the supplication, without the slightest of alteration. The Prophet (SAWS) used to do *istikharah* regarding everything.

If the Muslim wanted to do a lawful act, he should pray two *rak'a*-aside from the obligatory prayers-and supplicate with the above mentioned supplication. The answer to his prayer would come either in a good vision, expansion or contraction in his breast, facilitation or impediment of the issue. He should repeat *istikharah* until the time comes in which he would determine and entrust in Allah, ask Him to direct him, grant him success, and guidance.

It is important to learn the ninety nine Beautiful Names of Allah, for whoever learns, understands, and applies them would enter Paradise. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave [the company of] those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing.” (TMQ, 7:180).**

Therefore, at the beginning of every action, we, Muslims should seek the help of Allah by the suitable name of Allah; the name that suits the action we intend to do. If we would be an arbitrator in a case, we should say, “in the name of the All-Merciful, the Just, the Equitable, and The Truth”. We should resort to one or more of the Names of Allah. If He granted us good for example, then we say, “All praise is due to Allah the All-Merciful, the Superb Bestower, the Superb Provider, and the Generous.”

We deduce from the above mentioned that the *inabah* to Allah on the straight path is:

- 1- Turning to Allah whenever a sin is committed, the soonest the person can, in a sincere repentance.
- 2- Turning to Allah in everything. If it is obligatory or optional, we would do it. If it unlawful or undesirable, we would leave it.
- 3- Turning to Allah in the lawful issues through *istikharah* or consultancy, if we are determined, so, we would entrust in Allah.
- 4- Resorting to the Beautiful Names of Allah in all our actions.
- 5- Learn the conditioned and non-conditioned supplications before the actions and after them. This is the *nafs* returning to the Creator, whenever it forgets Him, indulged in its worldly life, desires and distractions.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Except [when adding], “If Allah wills.” And remember your Lord when you forget [it] and say, “Perhaps my Lord will guide me to what is nearer than this to right conduct.”(TMQ, 18:24).**

Allah (SWT) also says, **“And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers.” (TMQ: 51:55).**

Remember, that if we want to avoid Satan sharing with us what we do, we have to begin and end our actions with “In the name of Allah” and “All praise is due to Allah”.

The necessity of supplication while walking to and on the straight path

³⁵ Authentic hadith, reported by al-Bukhary.

1- Asking for guidance in the first phase of guidance to the path:

When an earnest one, searches for their creator and the reason they came to this world, should head towards the power that created him, and ask it, whatever its name, or nature is, to guide them to it and help him reaching the truth.

This search could be in different forms or even languages. However, it proves the person's honesty to find the right path; reach the great truth. Humans have no other way to reach for it but with the help and success that is granted by the power that created him.

They seek this power's help through supplicating, "Guide us to the straight path". They can choose any other style that would express the confusion they feel inside.

A human should ask for the help of other humans, who took the same path too. He should benefit from their experiences, advices and knowledge. He should seek the help of the knowledgeable and the professional, though they, themselves, cannot guide themselves; the messengers and the prophets, for example. He could turn to their stories, study it to know how they used to call people for faith, and how was the end of their stories.

Types of guidance:

- 1- Innate guidance
- 2- Senses guidance
- 3- Intellect guidance
- 4- Scholars' guidance
- 5- Prophets' guidance
- 6- Allah's Guidance

1- Innate guidance: This is a guidance that Allah placed in all living creatures, including plants. This is how its roots absorb water from the earth. The flower moves so as to face the sun wherever it goes. With this innate guidance the sun moves and runs toward its stopping point. By it, the planets spin around in their orbits, and the Earth rotates around it one time every 24 hours, and makes a full cycle around the sun once every 365 day.

2- Senses' guidance: It is the guidance provided by the senses to both animals and humans. They see with the eye. They hear with the ear. They talk with the tongue. They feel with the skin. They smell, and recognize smells with the nose. These senses are what distinguishes animals from plants. Animals had the two types of guidance, that is the inherit nature and the senses so as to live his life on the Earth.

3- Intellect's guidance: This is the type of guidance that distinguishes humans from animals and plants, which do not possess an intellect to correct the mistakes of the senses. When a dog looks at the water surface, it barks, because it sees an image of a dog before it. This is a mistake of the senses. The human's intellect only could correct it, because it is nourished by knowledge. This knowledge provides the human with the ability to recognize a reflected image, from a true one and that there is no dog under the water. Moreover, senses have mistakes and have limits of perception. For example, humans cannot listen but to a certain number of frequencies per second. If sound is beyond those limits, so this exceeds the ears' perception ability, and consequently it cannot be heard. This also applies to sight. There are too small objects to be seen by the eye. Here comes the importance of intellect to the human.

Whoever neglects it, would look like an animal. Whoever uses it, along with other senses too, to perceive facts, would elevate his humanity.

- 4- **Scholars' guidance:** Knowledge is what polishes the intellect. Without knowledge, intellect is like an empty cup, or a car without an engine. Here comes the importance of every human being concerned with their intellect; to nourish it with different sciences; make use of the senses to contemplate; collect pictures, information, and data, and train it to analyze and understand it. Allah (*SWT*) has clarified that scholars do fear Him. He called them as *Oloo al-Albab* (the people of reason). It means people who have intellect. They are the people who have intellects to reason, ears to hear, eyes to see, for it not the eyes that are blinded, but the hearts that are in the chests. Those scholars are the inheritors of prophets. They teach people and guide them to the right path at the absence of prophets and messengers. However, scholars are to be referred to and taught from. We may not find the role model we would be looking for in scholars, because they are fallible. Their role is limited to referring people to the good, truth, even if they did not do it themselves, or even if they made mistakes. They are humans, after all. From here comes the need to a greater guidance, which is the guidance of prophets and messengers. It surpasses the scholars' guidance with the role model and the excellent pattern they present. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”**(TMQ, 33:21).
- 5- **Prophets' guidance:** Prophets and messengers were chosen by Allah to announce His messages and words, receive knowledge from Him through revelation, or from behind a veil. He would also, send an angel as a messenger to the Messenger (*SAWS*) and reveal to him whatever He wishes. Then the Messenger (*SAWS*) would tell the people about Allah's complete revelation. He applies it to himself, so as to be the role model for the people; they follow him and be guided. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”** (TMQ, 33:21). This is the Messengers' guidance; guidance of reference, conduct, direction, and role model. Allah (*SWT*) also says, **“And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command. You did not know what is the Book or [what is] faith, but We have made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path “** (TMQ:42:52). Despite the power of this type of guidance, yet the Messenger (*SAWS*) himself, could not guide his own kinsfolk. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided.”** (TMQ, 28:56). Allah gave two examples of the people who disbelieved in Him; the son of Noah (*AS*) and the wife of Lut (*AS*) (Lot). Neither the father Messenger, nor the husband Messenger was able to guide the son or the wife. These are the limits of the guidance Messengers could provide. It is limited to refereeing people to the way of Allah (*AWJ*).
- 6- **Allah's guidance:** Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “Shall we invoke instead of Allah that which neither benefits us nor harms us and be turned back on our heels after Allah has guided us? [We would then be] like one whom the devils enticed [to wander] upon the earth confused, [while] he has companions inviting him to guidance, [calling], 'Come to us.' “** Say, **“Indeed, the**

guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance; and we have been commanded to submit to the Lord of the worlds. (TMQ, 6:71). And He also says, **“And do not trust except those who follow your religion.”** Say, **“Indeed, the [true] guidance is the guidance of Allah. [Do you fear] lest someone be given [knowledge] like you were given or that they would [thereby] argue with you before your Lord?”** Say, **“Indeed, [all] bounty is in the hand of Allah - He grants it to whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Wise.” (3:73).** Thus, complete guidance is only from Allah. It is not a mere reference, but it is out of constant granted success, help, and directing, until the Muslim reaches the complete guidance and reach for his Lord, Exalted and Sublimed be He. Man could refer others to the good, and yet does not follow it. Then, this guidance is worthless for that particular one. As for the guidance of Allah, it is guidance *to* and *on* the straight path, hence, it is a complete guidance; it is utterly perfect.

There is an adage that says, 'O Allah, take us by the hand to You, in the way You take the ones You honor. Help us if we straightened, and straighten us if we crooked'

This is the guidance meant in each prayer in the opening of the Book, **“Guide us to the straight path”**.

The guidance of Allah is what they ask for. No wonder that they do, because this is the utter and complete guidance that guide, save, and put the servant within the mercy of his creator, Exalted and Sublimed by He.

At the first phase of guidance; that is guidance *to* the right path, the servant resorts to all types of guidance, except for the guidance of Allah, for he did not reach for Him yet. However, after he enters Islam, he asks Allah to grant him the complete guidance, for [complete] guidance is the guidance of Allah.

2- Asking for guidance at the second phase of guidance; guidance *on* the path:

The servant's supplication “Guide us to the straight path” in his prayers at least 17 times a day shows how significant it is. Prayer is the main pillar of the religion and the solid pillar after saying *shahada*. It is the only obligatory worship that was imposed on Muslims in the heavens [during *al-Isra'* and *al-Mi'raj* Journey]. It is the first thing one would be brought to account for. If his prayers are good then he is safe and successful, and if it is bad, so he is a failure and a loser. Prayer consists of units, each called *rak'aa*. *Rak'a* has conditions, without which it would not be valid. The most important condition of all is reciting al-Fatiha.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “Whoever does not recite Al-Fatiha in his prayer, his prayer is invalid.”

Thus, the connection between the importance of prayers and reciting al-Fatiha shows clearly. If we pondered al-Fatiha, we would find it a supplication in itself; **“Guide us to the straight path”**. It is as if Allah (AWJ) wanted to assign the Muslim the recitation of al-Fatiha, and consequently say this supplication 170 times a day. Then He decreased them to 17 times only. This, if anything, indicates that uttering this supplication is such a serious issue. Nobody, whatsoever, is exempted from saying this supplication. As for the woman, she ceases to recite al-Fatiha [for she ceases to pray] during her menstruation. Hence, this is what is considered a deficiency in her religion.

Therefore, we have to make sure that we seek the guidance of Allah, knowing that we seek the complete guidance that nobody has but Him. We should not cease seeking it until the very last moment in our lives.

The most guided of all people was the Messenger (SAWS). He kept asking for the guidance of Allah until he died. He advised us to do so, as well.

If we want Allah to guide us on the straight path, then we have to be keen on supplicating. Here manifests the majesty of Allah, when He grants us His guidance, light, bounty, and generosity as a gift for us that we do not even deserve.

Guidance requires two phases:

- a- Guidance *to* the straight path [to Islam]
- b- Guidance *on* the straight path [in Islam]

“**Guide us to the straight path**” in al-Fatiha is the supplication that Allah assigned to the Muslim, to say 17 times a day, seeking the guidance of Allah, which is the real and complete guidance.

Supplication, alone, is not enough. There should be the seeking of means of attaining guidance, so that Allah would answer that supplication, and guide them on the straight path as He guided all the prophets like Moses, Aaron, and Muhammad (SAWS).

These means can be summarized as follows:

- 1- Seeking knowledge, starting from learning *dhikr* then the Book and *sunnah*.
- 2- Applying what has been learned. This is the righteous deeds, which is based on eating from the good things [granted by Allah] and seeking the lawful and unsuspecting sources.
- 3- Patience for the tribulation, and contentment with Allah's Decree and Destiny, whether good or bad, sweet or bitter.
- 4- *Inabah* to Allah after sinning. Seeking refuge in His Most Beautiful Names before every act.

If we, Muslims, supplicated sincerely and sought the means, Allah would answer our supplication.

Asking for guidance is infinite, ceaseless. The road to Allah never comes to an end. Reaching for Allah comes through the straight path. On this path, the servant will elevate, come closer to his Creator, his *nafs* purifies to transform from the soul that incites one to evil, to the reproaching soul, until it becomes the secured soul. When death approaches it, it would love and long for the meeting with Allah. Allah then would call the soul, “[**To the righteous it will be said**], “**O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him], And enter among My [righteous] servants, And enter My Paradise.**” (TMQ, 89:27-30).

Chapter 2

The first phase of guidance

(Guidance *to* the straight path)

- Introduction
- Scientific facts
- The Creator announces Himself to His creatures
- The last revelation
- Guidance *on* the straight path

The first phase of guidance

Guidance to the straight path; to Islam

Introduction

This discussion is directed to each and every human being, whatever their religion, nationality, or thought is.

Here, I ask you, dear reader as you read these lines, to stand before a mirror. You would see yourself. Imagine that the one looking in the mirror is somebody else than you. We have to know ourselves, first, before we know anything else. Do we not? Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And in yourselves. Then will you not see?”**

We, humans, are made of both flesh and soul. Flesh is like the dress of the soul. In the human psyche, the soul to the flesh is what the engine is to the body in the car; what the captain is to the ship or the knight is to his horse. The body has its lusts, and animal desires. The soul tries to overpower the body, so that the body would follow the soul's faith, inclinations, and aims.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless.”** (TMQ, 7:179).

Now, if you look at the image reflected on the mirror, the first thing you should think of is who is this person? You should know how far is your responsibility for that one you see before your eyes. How could you identify him/her? How could you direct him/her? The figure of the person you see in the mirror may change, while you would not.

If you watched this human, closely, you would find that he eats, drinks, sleeps, and breathes. He needs night to sleep in, so the sun sets, and the moon rises. When he wakes up, he needs morning, so the sun rises to provide him with it.

If he wants to relieve himself, he would go to the restroom and discharge wastes from his body, not knowing how [it is formed] and why.

If he is injured, blood would flow and clot and then a new layer of the skin would form.

At night, the body tosses and turns as if it is turned by somebody. He did not know the reason until science told us about the body's need for this movement. If the body kept immobile for long hours, it can develop bedsores.

When this person was a baby, he found two keepers; a father and a mother. They would stay up at night taking care of, providing for him, and sacrificing everything they can just for his wellbeing. He enjoyed the various kinds of food and drink that vary in shape, color, and taste. Whenever he asked for something, he would find it. Plants and animals are all subjected to serve him. The whole universe, with all its creatures, integrates to serve this human.

Should not this human ask himself, when did all this happen? Who created him? Why is he created and then will die? This is the same to the man who woke up to find himself in the desert, with a table full of food right before him [as mentioned earlier].

If this person, whom you see in the mirror, did not ask himself all these questions, so *you* should ask him.

Uncontroversial Scientific Facts

Sound intellect unhesitatingly, will acknowledge that this whole realm, with all its humans, animals, plants, forests, waves, seas, orbits, moons, stars, and everything whether mobile or immobile, they all indicate the presence of a doer. If a human trace would indicate that a person had passed from this place, then how about all that which we see before our eyes? How could it not indicate a creator and a doer?

Intellects cannot be taken too lightly as thus, to the extent of claiming that all this was created by coincidence. A doer, a great power, or even many powers, must be the one who did and still is doing this.

If we contemplated the integration of this universe with itself and man, or how it is fitted to serve him, we would find that everything moves according to certain predesigned codes since a long time ago. It never changes or alters. Throughout time, the sun had never risen from the west, nor refused to set. We never heard that the moon vanished or that the sea waves have stopped. Oxygen had never decreased in the air, so people would die. Water had never evaporated completely so people would not find water to drink.

Everything is following one system that does not change or alter. Amazingly, man, and despite his small size and little power, will be served by everything. Therefore, we can find a camel, pulled by a small child. It sits down so the child would mount it. Nevertheless, we are unable to catch a small fly, so it might disturb our sleep!! Exalted be He who subjected the camel so it complied to man, and yet did not subject the fly comply to him.

Furthermore, when we study how insects pollinate plants, then we see how the plant kingdom integrates with the animal kingdom. When you see the cow complies with it being slaughtered and the horse to be ridden by man; the sea carries the ships; the air carries airplanes, which weigh thousands of tons.

Such integration and subjection indicates that the power that created both the human along with the whole universe is one power, one will for one aim and there cannot be several powers or several gods. Otherwise, they would be unjust to one another. We would have

never seen such integration in such a marvelous system. We would have never seen these stable codes that rule this realm since the very beginning of the time. It had never changed or altered though people die and others are born.

Accordingly, it is clear that the universe and man, as well, must have a wise, superb creator of a mighty power, and who has no partners. Still, there is the question: where is this creator? To this point the intellect would stop, waiting for this power to announce itself, so he would be introduced to it and ask it: why did it bring him into this world? How could he use all these blessings to reach for the aim he was created for?

The Creator announces Himself to His creatures

If we studied history, we would find that throughout time, there were men who had come and told people that they had been sent from the creator. Those men were supported by miracles; supernatural phenomena. The One Creator supported them by it to prove their truthfulness. They did not ask people for any pay in return for their call. The message of all these messengers was summarized in one phrase: "There is no god but Allah, so worship Him." Some of these messengers came with divine books that contained the words of Allah to mankind. He tells them that after death there will be resurrection and they will be called into account for every thing they did in their life, whether small or big. Whoever believed, obeyed, and did righteous deeds, their scale [of good deeds] became heavy, hence entered Paradise. Whoever disbelieved, disobeyed, and corrupted, then their scale [of good deeds] became light, hence entered Hell, where they would neither die nor live.

Strangely, that the sender is always the same One. He never changes. The message is always the same. It never changes with the change of times or places these messengers were sent in.

It is worthy of man to approach these messages to become acquainted with his Creator, study His words, follow His messengers, specially that history had proved that those who followed the messengers were the successful and always victorious, while the ones who opposed the messengers were the losers.

The last of divine revelations:

Fourteen centuries ago, Muhammad Ibn-Abdullah (SAWS) was sent at the age of forty. The revelation came to him from Allah. The Qur'an began to be revealed unto him separately, along the 23 years of his call. Thirteen years were in Makkah, and then he immigrated to Madinah. There, he established the first Muslim society. He lived there for 10 years until he died at the age of 63. He was an orphan. He lived a modest life. He (SAWS) died and his shield was mortgaged to a Jew.

This man, (SAWS), was famous for his truthfulness and honesty. He was illiterate, and yet he recited the Qur'an, which the Arabs were unable to bring even one verse of the like, despite their fame of eloquence. The noble Qur'an is the last divine revelation. Allah (SWT) has taken upon Himself to preserve the Qur'an until the Hour of Resurrection, and here is the Qur'an, and after 14 centuries, not a single letter of it had been changed. The Qur'an you would find in China is identical to that you would find in Egypt or in South Africa. They are identical.

The Qur'an talks about scientific miracles in a time that lacked modern technology. It talks about the roundness of the Earth. It says, *Yokawwer al-Laila ala al-Nahar*, meaning, "He

wraps the night over the day and wraps the day over the night". That was revealed in a time when people used to think that the Earth is flat. The Qur'an handled the stages of the fetus development in his mother's womb. It starts as a clinging clot, a lump of flesh, and then bones. Many other scientific significance assures that this Qur'an can never be revealed other from the Creator of this realm.

The Qur'an has gone ahead of time and place. It speaks about things that happened in the past since the beginning of creation and then in the present time and then in the future. It shows what will happen at the end of days, the resurrection, and the written pages of deeds that will be made public, paradise, and hell. The Qur'an was ahead of place when it talked about things that happened and will happen in different places, where nobody could be in all these places at the same time. It even went ahead of the human psych itself, when it mentioned what the disbelievers say to themselves, and what they used to say or do secretly. They could not deny it. It even foretold the death of a person as a disbeliever³⁶, and it did happen.

The Qur'an foretold the result of the war between the Persians and the Byzantines, who were the most powerful armies at the time. The Qur'an mentioned that the Persians will defeat the Byzantines, and then the later will defeat the former a few years later.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“The Byzantines have been defeated. In the nearest land. But they, after their defeat, will overcome.”** (TMQ, 30:2-3).

Some Qur'anic *ayat*, even addressed Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*) in reproach, direction, and revealed what he has been keeping in his heart, and warned him from keeping the words of Allah. How could he, then, be the writer of these words? How could he bring such advanced knowledge while he was illiterate? He never, even, read poems.

This good man, along with his companions, strived and gave the role model in their honorable manners when dealing with enemies and friends as well. He was exemplary in his manners of truthfulness, honesty, tenderness, compassion towards the young and the old, the rich and the poor. When this good man died, Islam was already in the hearts of thousands. The first Muslim society, which applied the Qur'anic teachings, was established in Madinah. It was clear to everybody that he was right, and those who opposed him were wrong. However, Islam today has become the first religion in the world in the number of its followers, estimated at more than a billion and two hundred million Muslims. All of them worship Allah; never associate anything or anybody with Him. The noble Qur'an is their methodology, along with the *Sunnah* of their Prophet Muhammad Ibn-Abdullah (*SAWS*).

This man called people to believe in all previous messengers. He told them that he is the last of the prophets and there is no Prophet after him. He called people to believe in all the Books of Allah, which are not distorted. He called them to believe in the noble Qur'an, which is the dominant Book of all. It suits all times and places. No distorting hand would ever come near to it until the Day of Judgment. There will be no other message or divine book after the noble Qur'an. He called people to what all previous messengers had called their people to. He assured them that all messengers were sent by the One Creator, Who created them all. They were all of the same religion, same creed that is summarized in six points:

- 1- Belief in Allah, the One, the Only One, the Everlasting Sovereign, Who never begets nor is born, and nor is there to Him any equivalent.
- 2- Belief in angels. They are created from light. They cannot help but obey their Lord.

³⁶ It was Abu-Lahab, who is mentioned in *surat* al-Masad

- 3- Belief in all the divine books, before they were distorted.
- 4- Belief in all previous messengers and the ones of determination of them; Noah, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa (Jesus), and Muhammad (SAWS).
- 5- Belief in the Day of Judgment, on which all people will be resurrected from their graves.
- 6- Belief in destiny, whether good or bad, bitter or sweet.

This noble Messenger assured that Isa (AS) is a great Messenger. He was a miracle in his birth. His birth is similar to Adam. Adam (AS) was born without a father or a mother, and so Isa (AS), was born without a father. He is not the son of Allah. Allah Has no son, nor a companion. How could Isa (AS) be a god, and yet he once was a baby, who needs to be taken care of. He himself never claimed that he is the son of Allah. Allah (SWT) gifted him with such supernatural miracles, like all other messengers, so that people would be assured of his truthfulness and follow him.

The noble Prophet, Muhammad (SAWS), assured us that Isa (AS) neither was killed, nor crucified. He was ascended to the heavens until a certain time, in which he would descend to the Earth. Then, he would be a Muslim. He would die and be buried beside the grave of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS).

This good man, Muhammad Ibn-Abudllah (SAWS), called people to believe in the six pillars of belief; testify that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; embrace the religion of Allah, that is Islam; and submit to their One and Only One Creator. He also, declared that there is no compulsion in religion. People are free to believe or disbelieve. Whoever enters Islam by declaring *shahada* only and not truly believing with his heart is a hypocrite. He could not cheat Allah (SWT). He will be in the lowest depths of hellfire. He, also, told us that whoever Allah wants to guide, He expands his breast [to contain] Islam; and whoever He wants to misguide, He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he was climbing into the sky.

Guidance to the straight path; Islam

After all what you heard, what would you advise the one you see in the mirror? If you advise him to follow the guidance and enter Islam, then you are calling him to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; eat from the good things [Allah created]; avoid wicked things or actions; be good in himself, and do good to others; to be devout , pious, nice; to love others; favor them over himself; repel evil with that which is better; call people for the good; do good; never wait for a reward but from his Creator; maintain his body, mind, wife/husband, children, health, properties; respect the sacredness of blood, properties, honors of people; help the oppressed; relieve the afflicted; be a mercy just like this noble man, Muhammad Ibn-Abdullah (SAWS) was. If the person you advise entered Islam, then he is reasonable; has objectives; knows how to live and why, how to think, how to choose, how to be useful for himself and the others.

However, if you advised him to ignore all of it, so you want him to continue his life, headless; lost in his desires; manipulated by devils humans and jinn as well; aimless, with no methodology to follow, with no role model, or morals. He would do well to people if they do well to him, and he would wrong people if they wronged him. A godless person is a soulless one. He shuts his eyes and deafens his ears so not to recognize the signs of Allah in the universe. He does not work his mind, contemplate, nor ponder. His life is limited to eating, drinking, sleeping, marrying, reproducing, just like animals do.

If this person entered Islam, and assumed that he found no judgment, paradise, nor hellfire, so he had lived happily, as a good person, doing good; he would leave a good memory behind him. He did not lose anything whatsoever. If he disbelieved, however, so in all cases he would live a miserable life; be hated amongst people; corrupt the Earth. Curses would follow him after his death to his children.

On the other hand, however, if he neglected the call of his Creator, chose disbelief over belief, so he is doomed. On the Day of Judgment, he would be resurrected blind. He would say, 'O Allah, why have you resurrected me blind, while I was [once] seeing?' [Allah] will say, "Our signs came to you, and you forgot them; and thus you will be forgotten on this Day."

Today [as we live] we do deeds and are not judged, but tomorrow [on the Day of Judgment], we will be judged but with no deed to do.

The black fire of hell, whose fuel is people and stones, then would receive him. Over it, [appointed] there will be harsh and severe angels. The fire is dark. It has a sound of inhaling and exhaling. Allah Has made it of seven levels, where humans neither die nor live. Allah Has prepared it for the disbelievers, hypocrites, who chose disbelief over belief. Allah (SWT) does not forgive to be associated with, yet He forgives anything else, for whoever He wills. Furthermore, those disbelievers are the corruptors. They are the people of oppression, transgression, and sin on this Earth. None of them would enter the hellfire, until he knows that he deserves it, because of what he committed.

If you wish your friend good, you will order him to hasten to Allah; run to Him, embrace His religion; repent from everything he did in the past; say *shahada*; bathe, for he is been newly born, and his heart became alive in this very moment.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And is one who was dead and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people like one who is in darkness, never to emerge therefrom? Thus it has been made pleasing to the disbelievers that which they were doing.”** (TMQ, 6:122).

Islam erases from his heart whatever happened in the past. This is the door of the straight path. It is open before you. You have entered it by declaring *shahada* that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Messenger. You became a Muslim, so congratulations. Congratulations, that Allah Has answered your supplication. He called you, guided you to the straight path, and expanded your breast to Islam.

Now, as you are standing on the beginning of the road to Allah, supplicate Allah that He guides you on the straight path, and you reach for Him through the straight path. This is end of part one of guidance; Guidance *to* straight path, Islam.

Part Three

Phase Two of Guidance Guidance *on* the Straight Path

- Introduction
- Pillars of Islam
- The aim of the Pillars of Islam
- The relative importance of the five pillars

The second Phase of guidance

Guidance *on* the straight path

Introduction

I am addressing whoever was born as Muslim. Which means, their father is a Muslim, so in the certificate of birth, he wrote that he is a Muslim. He did not stop and ask himself why he is a Muslim.

Islam is based on faith. One should not follow their parents, except after they think and search for the truth.

The Qur'an criticized the disbelievers because they refused to listen to their messengers. They refused to abandon what their ancestors believed in; even when they became sure that their ancestors had gone astray. Allah (*AWJ*) orders humans to search for the truth themselves; to be educated; busy his mind until he reaches for Allah (*SWT*), who is closer to him than his parents, ancestors, and clan.

According to the aforementioned, every human, when he attains puberty, he should seek the truth. They should declare their Islam because they are convinced that this is the right path. This path has the good for them and all humanity. They are not an imitator or a mere blind follower to their ancestors.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“The Bedouins say, “We have believed.” Say, “You have not [yet] believed; but say [instead], 'We have submitted,' for faith has not yet entered your hearts. And if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not deprive you from your deeds of anything. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (TMQ, 49:14).**

We started this book by talking about the first phase of guidance, which is the guidance *to* the straight path. It is an essential phase for those who were born Muslims.

The Prophet (*SAWS*) said, “Renew your faith. They asked, “O Messenger of Allah, how would we renew our faith? He said, “increase the number of times you say 'There is no god but Allah’³⁷

³⁷ Reported by Ahmad

The Pillars of Islam:

After the seed of faith [in Allah, His angels, Books, Messengers, the Day of Judgment, and destiny] became existent in one's heart, they translate this unseen faith by declaring their *shahada* [saying, *la ilaha illa Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*] with their tongue. Thus, they have entered Islam. This is what they and the others would see. They are on the beginning of the road to Allah, on the straight path.

By declaring *shahada*, they entered Islam, yet they are not Muslims unless they abide by its laws, and preserve their faith.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, "Islam is based on (the following) five (principles): to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Messenger, to offer the obligatory prayers dutifully and perfectly, to pay zakah (alms), to perform Hajj, and to observe fast during the month of Ramadan."³⁸

This *hadith* showed that Islam is not limited to these five principles only. Rather, it compared Islam to a building, which has foundations. Islam's foundations are those five. As for Islam itself, it is the building. Consequently, these five are essential for Islam, but they are not the aim, and not enough, for there is no building with no foundations. As well, the foundations are worthless without the building.

The Five Pillars are but means to plant piety in the heart of a human being. To teach him how to submit to Allah in all times; how to be watchful in all his deeds, secretly and publicly. Do the lawful deeds, and abstain from the unlawful ones. Keep the limits ordained by Allah and declared in His Book and His Prophet's *Sunnah*. Apply it to himself and to whoever he provides for.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, "**O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous.**" (TMQ, 2:183). He also says, "**Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj. And whatever good you do - Allah knows it. And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah. And fear Me, O you of understanding.**" (TMQ, 2:197).

The Messenger (SAWS) said, "Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting)."³⁹

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, "**Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you. Thus have We subjected them to you that you may glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and give good tidings to the doers of good.**" (TMQ, 22: 37).

The Messenger (SAWS) said, "A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands."⁴⁰

³⁸ Reported by al-Bukhary

³⁹ Reported by al-Bukhary

⁴⁰ Reported by al-Bukhary

All these Qur'anic and prophetic texts teach the one who declared *shahada* that whoever enters Islam, should complete those pillars. They should fear Allah, obey Him in all times, situations, for better or for worse; secretly or publicly. This is what completes their Islam. The beginning is to apply these pillars with this perception.

The interrelation between the five pillars:

We notice that Allah (*AWJ*) made these pillars as regular stops, at which one pauses to reconsider themselves, their relation with their Lord, rejuvenate their faith, and nourish their soul and body with what they need.

From here came the importance of the reminder to the humankind. *Insan* (humankind) comes from *nasa* (forgot). Therefore, man was called so because he used to forget. These pillars are a reminder of Allah, and faith that reminds him all the time, to bring him back to the realm of Islam if he went astray. This is the reason of emphasizing the essentiality of these pillars for the human. If one of them is, absent, then how could a building be built when one of its five foundations is missing?

A program to remind us of Allah, in order to rejuvenate our faith and Islam:

- We are ordered to pray five times, at least, each day. They were fifty and they were decreased to five, yet with the same reward of fifty prayers. If we assumed that a person sleeps six hours and a half each day, it means that, on average, there are a prayer every three hours and a half, aside from the *nawafil* (voluntary prayers). If prayers were still 50, then there would have been a prayer every twenty minutes on average.
- Every 11 months, we are to fast in the month of Ramadan, and pay *zakah*.
- We are to perform *Hajj* once in a lifetime when it is possible for us.

Here we see that the pillars of Islam put a regular and precise system to remind the Muslim throughout his day, year, and life of his Lord. Every three hours and a half, he prays for a few minutes. He stands between the Hands of his Creator to correct what has been corrupted in his body, soul, and deeds because of his actions.

Every year, he adds to this prayers a 12-hour-fast that lasts for a whole month. He also pays *zakah* annually. Then he adds *Hajj*, which is to be preformed once in a lifetime. It lasts for a few days, during which he leaves his homeland, family, and properties; wears his shroud and then finds himself in a mass gathering of Muslims from all around the globe.

Allah (*SWT*) says in a *hadith qudsi*, “And the most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined upon him. My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing *nawafil* (praying or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him, so I become his sense of hearing with which he hears, and his sense of sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he grips...”⁴¹

The first pillar, *shahada*, the Muslim repeats at every *adhan* (the call to prayer), and every prayer. This is why the Messenger (*SAWS*) said, “Five prayers and from one Friday prayer to (the next) Friday prayer is an expiation (of the sins committed in between their intervals) if major sins are not committed.”⁴²

⁴¹ Reported by al-Bukhary.

⁴² Reported by Muslim

He (SAWS) also said, “The deed loved most by Allah is one which is done constantly even though it is insignificant.”⁴³

The Qur'an praised those who maintain their prayers, and do not forget it in what can be translated as, “**And those who [carefully] maintain their prayer**” (TMQ, 70:34). He (SWT) also says, “**Those who are constant in their prayer** (TMQ, 70:23). He also says, “**So woe to those who pray, [But] who are heedless of their prayer,**” (TMQ, 107:4-5).

The Relative Importance of the Five Pillars

It has to be emphasized that each pillar is irreplaceable by the other. They are all integral to each other. Each pillar has its effect on the human psyche. That system was determined by the servant's Creator, who is the most Knowing it. For example [and for Allah is the best attribute], when a doctor prescribes a medicine, he tells the patient when to take it. The patient does not argue with the doctor about the medicine, time, or if he can abandon one of medicines prescribed. The same applies to the five pillars; they are inseparable. They all integrate and form the means that addresses man from different aspect, in order to enter piety into his heart.

This will result in correcting the relation between him and his Lord. In turn, it would correct the relation between him and the people as well. Then, he would be able to do righteous deeds that would correct the universe.

Pondering these pillars, being obligatory and regular, we find that there is a direct proportion between their repetition [in each lifetime] and the need for each one of them. The more a human needs it, the more it is to be performed, and the shortest its intervals are. We can see this through the following:

- 1- *Shahada*: there is no excuse for not mentioning and repeating it in each prayer once or twice. It comes ahead of the rest of the pillars of Islam.
- 2- A Muslim is never exempt from performing prayers, even if he is on his deathbed. If he could not stand to pray, then he could sit, or lie down. As for the woman, she is exempted from prayers only during her menstruation.
- 3- A Muslim is exempt from fasting only if there is a lawful excuse. *Zakah* is similar to prayer. The poor, who does not have *nisab* (the minimum amount of property liable to payment of *zakah*) is exempt from *zakah*.
- 4- Hajj is obligatory for those who have the physical and financial capability, or else, it is not obligatory. As for the able one, they should hasten to fulfill this pillar and not postpone it.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “He who possesses sufficient provisions and means of journey for the performance of Hajj and yet does not do so, let him die the death of a Jew or a Christian”⁴⁴

According to the aforementioned, we can see that the most important pillar of all is prayers, which is the main foundation of religion. Whoever performs it preserves [his] religion, and whoever abandons it, wrecks [his] religion. There is no excuse for a Muslim to drop it. From here, we deduce that the Muslim should abide by the five pillars, for they are the base of Islam.

In the following, we will be tackling each pillar in more details and research.

⁴³ Reported by Muslim

⁴⁴ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

First Pillar: Performing *Hajj* by the able

Meaning of *Hajj*: to head for a glorified objective. Allah (SWT) says, “In it are clear signs [such as] the standing place of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe. And [due] to Allah from the people is a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves - then indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds.” (TMQ, 3:97).

Ihram⁴⁵: It is the intention to enter a special state in order to perform *Umrah*⁴⁶ or *Hajj*. In this state, the man abandons sewed garments. He wears a *redaa'* [to cover the upper part of the body] and *izaar* [to cover the lower part of the body]. He abandons hunting, nail paring, hair cutting, wearing perfume, and head and heel covering. He also should abstain from sexual intercourse and obscenity, arguing, and sinning. The same applies to women, except for the sewed garments.

Tahallul [acts performed as a fulfillment of hajj or *Umrah*] for women is by clipping a little of their hair. As for men, they can shorten or shave their hair. The latter is better.

Ihram should be at the *miqat*⁴⁷. *Miqat* is specified according to the place the pilgrim comes from towards Makkah, for each direction has its own *miqat*. If the person performing *Hajj* or *Umrah* crosses it and is yet to make *ihram*, he should slaughter [an animal as expiation].

It is important to indicate that it is more preferable to do *ihram* after an obligatory prayer. Or else, after bathing, they can pray two *rak'aa*, intending *ihram*; wear the garments of *ihram*; and wear some perfume.

One is not considered *muhrim* for only bathing or wearing *ihram* garments, but with the utterance of the intention. One says, “O Allah, I intend to make *Umrah/Hajj*. O Allah, accept it from me and make it easy for me.” Then he starts saying *talbeyyah*⁴⁸

It is *sunnah* to say *talbeyyah* as many times as you can, whenever one changes their situation. One keeps saying *talbeyyah* until they finish all rituals.

***Umrah*:**

Pillars of *Umrah*

- 1- *Ihram* at *miqat*.
- 2- *Tawaf* (circumambulation of the Ka'ba) seven rounds. *Wudu'* (ablution) is a condition of validity of *tawaf*.
- 3- *Sa'i*⁴⁹ seven times [from as-Safa to al-Marwa is one time, and then from al-Marwa to as-Safa is another time].

Note: according to the majority of scholars, whoever does not shave or shorten his hair has to slaughter, but it does not nullify *Hajj* [which is stated in other opinions].

⁴⁵ A state of consecration for hajj. Includes dress and or prayer.

⁴⁶ *Umrah*: voluntary short pilgrimage that can be performed at any time of the year.

⁴⁷ *Miqat*: are the specific boundaries before which a person intending hajj or umrah must declare ihram. They differ according to the directions.

⁴⁸ *Talbeyyah*: is a statement one who performs Hajj or Umrah says right after declaring verbally their intention to make Umrah or Hajj. They say, "Here I am O Allah, (in response to Your call), here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Verily all praise, grace and sovereignty belong to You. You have no partner."

⁴⁹ *Sa'i*: Striving between the two hills of as-Safa and al-Marwa in Makkah.

*Sunnan*⁵⁰ of *Umrah* and desirable actions:

- 1- Praying two *rak'aa* behind *maqam Ibrahim*⁵¹ after *tawaf*.
- 2- Praying two *rak'aa* in *Hijr Ismai'l*⁵²
- 3- Drinking the water of *Zamzam*⁵³ before *sa'i* and supplicating Allah for *Zamzam* is good for whatever is intended [if one wishes something while drinking it, it would come true].
- 4- Entering the Sacred Mosque through as-Salam door.
- 5- Uncovering the right shoulder for men [it is called *iddibaa'*] during *tawaf* in the first three rounds and jogging.
- 6- [Only for men] hastening between the Two Green Pillars⁵⁴.
- 7- Supplicating during *tawaf* between the Yamaany corner [a corner of the Ka'ba that is in the direction of Yemen] and the Black Stone with the following, "O Allah, grant us the best in this life and in the next life. Protect us from the punishment of the hellfire."

Hajj

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, "In it are clear signs [such as] the standing place of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe. And [due] to Allah from the people is a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way. But whoever disbelieves - then indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds." (TMQ, 3:97).

Pillars of Hajj

- 1- *Ihram*.
- 2- Staying in *Arafat* on the ninth of the month of *Dhul-Hijjah*.
- 3- *Tawaf al-Ifada*, which is seven rounds. It is called the Pillar.
- 4- *Sa'i* of the *Hajj*.

Note: According to the majority of scholars, whoever does not shave or shorten his hair has to slaughter, but it does not nullify Hajj [which is stated in other opinions].

Ability to perform Hajj

Hajj is obligatory for whoever has the [lawful] financial and physical ability.

It is worth mentioning that the Hajj of a child [yet to reach puberty] is counted in his good deeds. However, he should fulfill the obligation of performing Hajj when he is an adult.

Financial ability

Whoever possesses the required money that is enough for his trip and return should perform *Hajj*. Money should be enough for whom he provides for during his absence, even if this money would be obtained by selling some of his house furniture for example. They are material things, after all that could be lived without. Surely, Allah (AWJ) will grant him better than what he gave up.

⁵⁰ Sunnan: singular= sunnah.

⁵¹ Maqam Ibrahim: Ibrahim's station, the stone on which Prophet Ibrahim (SAWS) stood while he and Prophet Ismai'l were building the Ka'ba.

⁵² Hijr Ismai'l: a space in the shape of a semicircle beside the Ka'ba surrounded by a stone wall.

⁵³ Zamzam: a water well, sprang under the feet of Isma'il (AS) when he was a child. It is a blessed well that has been flowing with water thousands of years ago.

⁵⁴ The Two Green Pillars: a short distance in the middle of the distance between as-Saffa and al-Marwa. They are marked in green at their beginning and end. Men should hasten in this distance in particular than in the remainder of the place of the sa'i.

A youth should put *Hajj* ahead of marriage. *Hajj* is obligatory, while marriage is not.

A husband is not obligated to pay for his wife's *Hajj*, though it is desirable, because he is responsible for her. If she has the financial ability, she is obligated to perform *Hajj*. Otherwise, *Hajj* then would not be obligatory for her. If she is able to perform *Hajj*, so she should pay from her money. It is desirable to travel with her husband or *mahram*⁵⁵ if it is not possible; she is still allowed to travel, if there is a good and safe company.

Physical ability

A person must be healthy and physically fit. It means there are no health restrictions that prevent them from *Hajj*. He should follow the advice of a professional Muslim physician. However, if one is in good health, yet paralyzed, but there is someone who could push his wheelchair or something of the sort, so he is eligible to perform *Hajj* as long as he has the financial ability.

A Muslim should be keen on performing this obligatory worship at least once in a lifetime. It is even desirable to perform it more than once, for it is a pillar. The Messenger (SAWS) said, "He who possesses sufficient provisions and means of journey for the performance of *Hajj* and yet does not do so, let him die the death of a Jew or a Christian."⁵⁶

A Muslim should not postpone this obligatory worship. Whenever he has the ability, he should hasten to perform it before he becomes busy; lose his wealth or health; or dies.

Note:

- 1- It is permissible for those who have already performed *Hajj* to perform it again on behalf of someone else, who is dead, or maybe alive but unable to perform it himself [very sick or not likely to recover].
- 2- It is more preferable for the one who already performed *Hajj* once (and so fulfilled the obligation) to pay the cost of *Hajj* as alms, instead of performing it once more. However, if he is deeply longing for *Hajj*, he should make *istikhara*⁵⁷. He should ask his Lord (AWJ) to open his heart to whatever Allah loves and accepts.

Important advice for pilgrimage:

- 1- He should occupy his tongue only with *dhikr* and Qur'an recitation. He should avoid the gatherings in which people argue or spend their time in leisure.
- 2- Pilgrims should occupy their time in serving brothers, give them water, feed them, and help them with all the good they can offer. For example, they can collect some money in Mena, buy cold milk, and distribute it to the poor pilgrims, who take under bridges as their dwellings, especially in hot weather.
- 3- To be humble, and associate with the weak and the poor.
- 4- Acquainting with his Muslim brothers from all over the globe as much as possible.
- 5- Always keep the feeling that he is wearing his shrouds, and waiting for death.
- 6- Repent sincerely, cry over his sins, the public or the secret ones.
- 7- Return people's rights to them and restore his relations with others.
- 8- Abstain from sins and wrong doings that he used to do before *Hajj*. Exert more effort in fulfilling *shari'a* (Islamic law) that he used to perform.

⁵⁵ Mahram: a male relative with whom it is unlawful to marry.

⁵⁶ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

⁵⁷ Istikhara: is a prayer for guidance.

- 9- Shave his hair. He should make himself comply to it, and out of love for Allah. This would be a new beginning, in which obeying Allah refines the self and its inclinations.
- 10- To confer favor, bring happiness to the largest number of people, especially relatives. Also, relieve the grief-stricken; ease their pains; grant them knowledge, time, and money; and prefer them to himself.
- 11- Set a schedule for himself to organize his time between Qur'an recitation, knowledge gatherings, good doings, serving Muslims, *qiam* (voluntary night prayer), *tasbeeh* (exaltation of Allah), and pondering. He should not leave a chance for Satan to interfere.
- 12- Be keen on Allah's acceptance for your *Hajj*, so that you return home sinless just as the day you were born. The sign [of Allah's acceptance] is that your relation with Allah would be better than it was before *Hajj*.
- 13- Keep himself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. He should not let his eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly life.
- 14- Visiting the Prophet (SAWS) tomb is *wajeb* (necessary) [not doing it does not nullify *Hajj*]; it is not an obligation. However, whoever neglects visiting the Prophet (SAWS) is as if he had avoided him.
- 15- *Hajj* should also be used as an international Islamic conference, in which Muslims gather to be acquainted with each other. Every one of them will be introduced to their brothers' circumstances in other countries. They would discuss the aspects of integration and social, economic solidarity. Thus, he should establish channels of communication and friendships with Muslims from all over the globe. Each one would be helpful to his brother/sister. Whoever does not care about Muslims' affairs, is not one of them. Allah helps the servant as long as he serves his brother

Some Lights of *Hajj*

- Whoever feels his heart longing for *Hajj* let him regard it as a good omen that the King Has invited him to visit His house. He does not permit anybody to enter His house unless He loves him, and loves to honor him. Therefore, he should supplicate Allah so that He would accept him as His guest; to be content, and never be displeased with him ever after. He should always be doubtful of whether or not Allah (SWT) would give him such honor [of performing *Hajj* or *Umrah*]. What an honor it is when the King invites us to visit His house. We go there in response to His call, which goes back to the time of Ibrahim (AS). When he built the House, Allah (SWT) told him what can be translated as, “**And proclaim to the people the *Hajj*; they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass.**” (TMQ, 22:27). It is like the *adhan* of prayer. It calls upon the pilgrim to hasten to Allah's mercy; hasten to the House of Allah.
- *Tawaf* is the Salutation of the Sacred Mosque. However, we can pray two *rak'aa* instead. The conditions of validity of *tawaf* are the same to those of prayer. They are *wudu'*, cleanliness of body, cloth, and place.
- The Black Stone is the right hand of Allah (SWT) on earth. On the Day of Judgment, it testifies in favor of those who kissed it. Therefore, do your best to kiss it. Nevertheless, do not crowd or hurt others, or else, it would be better to just point at it.
- Praying inside Hijr Isami'l is like praying inside the Ka'ba. The foundations of the Ka'ba include Hijr Isma'il. Therefore, it is not permissible to make *tawaf* through the Hijr. It should be from the outer side of it.
- Remember that your *tawaf* is a prayer. You should occupy yourself during it with *dhikr*, *du'aa*, and Qur'an recitation. You should know that it is glorification of Allah's rites.

However, bear in mind that the Black Stone neither benefits, nor harms. Whoever honors the rites of Allah, indeed it is from the piety of their hearts.

- The water of Zamzam is good for whatever it is intended. Supplicate Allah, and then drink until you feel you are completely full.
- Be keen on praying two *rak'aa* behind Ibrahim's Station. It is where the footprints of Ibrahim (AS), as he was building the Ka'ba with Isma'il, are shown [on a piece of rock]. There, remember that Zamzam sprang under the feet of Isma'il (AS), when his mother Hajar was making *sa'i* between as-Safa and al-Marwa mountains. She was searching for water so that her child would not die out of thirst.
- The *sa'i* of the pilgrim between as-Safa and al-Marwa is a simulation to what Hajar did. Pointing toward the Ka'ba, also, after each round is a simulation to when she had to look to where Isma'il was sitting, to make sure he is fine. She was looking for water for the child. She lost hope that she might find someone to help. Then her hopes were all fulfilled when she turned to Allah (SWT) in the seventh round. She was on al-Marwa then. Only then, she saw Zamzam springing under the feet of Isma'il (AS). The good flowed out of this well ever since. When the passing tribes found it, people began to gather around it and settle there. A while later, Allah (SWT) ordered Ibrahim to build His House near to this blessed well. Ibrahim (AS) laid the foundations. Allah (SWT) ordered him to call people for *Hajj*. There was nobody there to listen to the *adhan*. Nevertheless, Allah (SWT) made people hear it, even the unborn. When they were born, they came to the House, in response to their Lord's call. They say, "*Labbayka Allahuma Labbayk* (Here I am at Your service, I respond to Your call.)"

These issues should be known by every pilgrim. He should ponder the wisdom and lessons behind it to capture the essence of *Hajj*. Only then, his effort would have a greater meaning. Thus, the reward of Allah (AWJ) becomes greater.

We ask Allah, the Ever-Exalted, the Almighty to enable us all to perform *Hajj* over and over. May He accept us amongst His guests; let us enjoy the visit of His Messenger's tomb in Madianh. May He honor us with meeting, saluting, and standing before Him, for He is the All-Hearing, the Near, and responsive to supplications.

This is a quick brief on the *fard* (obligation) of *Hajj* and *Umrah*. The dear reader is kindly requested to read al-*Hajj* chapter from the Qur'an, along with its interpretation; read the books that tackles the legislative aspects of *Hajj*. We advise our reader to choose the cautious rules, whenever it is available for them. They can abide by the easier in case they need it. When the Prophet (SAWS), was performing *Hajj*, whenever he was asked about something easy, he told them to do it for there is no harm in it. Therefore, do not overload yourself.

You also should consider the people accompanying you. You should consider their strength, and how much do they bear. Always remember that Allah (SWT) intends for us ease, and does not intend for us hardship. The *Sunnah* is what the Prophet (SAWS) did in his *Hajj*. He performed *Hajj* just once and it was the perfect *Hajj*. The books of Islamic jurisprudence indicate the minimum of the accepted acts, so that your *Hajj* would be valid. Try to be in the middle of these two limits. You should be ambitious to reach the level of perfection, but not at the expense of the others, who accompany you or Muslims there in general.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, "He who performs *Hajj* for Allah's pleasure and avoids all lewdness and sins will return after *Hajj* free from all sins as he was the day his mother gave birth to him."⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Reported by Ahmad

Zakah⁵⁹

Definition of *zakah*

Linguistic definition: purification, for *zakah* purifies money, and its possessor's soul.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Take, [O, Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them. Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.”** (TMQ, 9:103).

Zakah increases and blesses the wealth, on which it is paid. It also blesses what is left. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And whatever you give for interest to increase within the wealth of people will not increase with Allah. But what you give in zakah, desiring the countenance of Allah - those are the multipliers.”** (TMQ, 30:39).

Legislative meaning

- *Zakah* is giving wealth, specified by *shari'a* (Islamic law), to an eligible one, and the giver would not benefit from it by any means.
- *Zakah* is the right of Allah in specific wealth, which should be given to specific categories of Muslims.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And those within whose wealth is a known right, For the petitioner and the deprived,”** (TMQ, 70:24-25).

An Introduction about *zakah*

Zakah was imposed in Makkah at the beginning of Islam with no specifics (amounts or types of wealth). In the second year of *hijrah* (the migration from Makkah to Madinah), its amounts were imposed on every type of wealth.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And establish prayer and give *zakah* and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience].”**(TMQ, 2:43).

Whoever refuses to pay *zakah* because he does not believe it is obligatory is *kafir* (disbeliever), ignorant, and sinful. He will lose his wealth in the worldly life, and will be punished on the Day he meets Allah (*SWT*). Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, indeed many of the scholars and the monks devour the wealth of people unjustly and avert [them] from the way of Allah . And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah - give them tidings of a painful punishment, The Day when it will be heated in the fire of Hell and seared therewith will be their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, [it will be said], “This is what you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard.”** (TMQ, 9:34-35).

He also says, **“And let not those who [greedily] withhold what Allah has given them of His bounty ever think that it is better for them. Rather, it is worse for them. Their necks will be encircled by what they withheld on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. And Allah , with what you do, is [fully] Acquainted.”** (TMQ, 3:180).

⁵⁹ *zakah* (mandatory alms-giving): A proportion of the wealth (2.5%) of every Muslim to be paid annually for the benefit of the needy in the Muslim community

The importance of the relation between *zakah* and prayer is mentioned in 82 *ayah* of the Qur'an. Allah (SWT) also described 'believers' as those who pay *zakah*, and establish prayer in what can be translated as, **“The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give *zakah* and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.”** (TMQ, 9:71).

Prayer and *zakah* embody the Muslims' submission to Allah (AWJ); whether in himself, or his money. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? So rejoice in your transaction which you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment.”** (TMQ, 9:111).

This is the price of paradise. The Muslim sells himself and his property to Allah to buy paradise. Establishing prayer and paying *zakah* are the price to be paid for the owner of the commodity. Indeed, it is an expensive commodity; it is paradise. The submission of one's self is embodied in prayer, with all it comprises of standing, bowing down, prostrating. The submission of one's money to Allah (SWT) is embodied in paying *zakah* on his properties.

The aim of the Islamic law is to make the Muslim a successor on earth to set it right. He cannot set the earth right unless he himself is righteous. This is why prayer is the way to set the Muslim's self, and state with his Lord right. Then he would be able to set right his relation with the people, through paying *zakah*. The more the Muslim is righteous, and sincere, the more he would set things right and his soul would be purified. Then he would reach the rank of the pious whom Allah (SWT) describes in His Book with what can be translated as, **“Alif, Lam, Meem, This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah, Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them, And who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith]. Those are upon [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful.”** (TMQ, 2:1-5).

We are ordered to establish prayer, not to merely perform it. It means that prayer builds a relation that increases with each *rak'aa* to Allah.

Allah (SWT) says and can be translated as, **“The ones who establish prayer, and from what We have provided them, they spend.”** (TMQ, 8:3). He describes those, who spend not only from money, but also from all types of what they are provided with. He did not mention *zakah*, for it is only the minimum spending.

The pious, however, who pray, and whose souls are purified, spend more than the minimum. Here shows another aspect of the important relation between prayer and *zakah*. Establishing prayer and paying *zakah* are goals of having authority on the earth. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“[And they are] those who, if We give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give *zakah* and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And to Allah belongs the outcome of [all] matters.”** (TMQ, 22:41).

Introduction to zakah:

Zakah is incumbent upon free Muslim, who possesses the *nisab*⁶⁰ in any type of wealth [gold, silver, crops, fruits, articles of trade, cattle, minerals, and *rikaz* (treasures buried in the earth)] on which *zakah*.

Note:

- 1- *Zakah* is not to be paid on the necessities of one's life such as food, (personal) cloths, (personal) vehicle, machinery of a factory, and house furniture.
- 2- The wealth subject to *zakah* should be in the possession of the *zakah* payer for a *hawl*⁶¹, except for plants and fruits. *Zakah* should be paid on these items immediately after being harvested. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And He it is who causes gardens to grow, [both] trellised and untrellised, and palm trees and crops of different [kinds of] food and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of [each of] its fruit when it yields and give its due [zakah] on the day of its harvest. And be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess.” (TMQ, 6:141).**

It is worth mentioning that the *nisab* of gold 20 *mithqal*⁶²= 96 grams. The *nisab* of silver is 200 dirham⁶³ = 624 grams. It is calculated according to the price of each on the day of calculating the value to be paid. The amount of *zakah* that should be paid is 2.5 % of the value of the wealth owned.

NB: the wealth of a child, even an orphan is subject to *zakah* if it reached *nisab*. The child's legal guardian is responsible for paying it.

How *zakah* is calculated

1. Specify a date on the lunar calendar, on which the amount of *zakah* should be assigned. It should be assigned on the same date every *hijry* year.
2. A Muslim should be keen on paying all his debits and collect all his credits before this specific date.
3. All money one has in the banks should be counted. Accounts in foreign currency should be valued against local currency on the date of calculating the amount of *zakah*. Also, defining the price of gold and silver on that date so that *nisab* would be counted.
4. An amount of 2.5 % should be counted of the total value of the wealth. One should pay *zakah* as soon as possible to the categories of Muslim beneficiaries. They are:
 - a. The poor
 - b. The needy
 - c. Those employed to collect, and distribute *zakah*.
 - d. Freeing slaves
 - e. People in debt and even have nothing to sell so that they can pay their debts (*al-gharimeen*)
 - f. Supplying Muslim armies to fight the conquerors (for the cause of Allah)
 - g. The wayfarer, who is away from his homeland and needs money to return to his country, even if he is rich.

⁶⁰ Nisab: is the minimum amount of wealth, on which zakah is imposed.

⁶¹ Hawl: is one lunar year, which is 354 days.

⁶² Mithqal: a special kind of weight used for weighting gold.

⁶³ Dirham: a silver coin, the shape of which resembled that of a date stone.

5. If a Muslim wishes to pay *zakah* in monthly installments, then he should pay *zakah* in advance before its due date. He should keep an account of the amounts paid, so that on the due date, he calculates *zakah* and then deduct the installments paid in advance, and then pays the rest of *zakah* as soon as possible.
6. A Muslim should have *niyyah* (intention) when he is to pay *zakah*, because it is an act of worship. *Niyyah* is a necessity in acts of worship. *Zakah* cannot be paid for non-Muslims, yet *sadaqa* (voluntary alms) can be paid to Muslims and non-Muslims as well.
7. After paying *zakah*, it is *Sunnah* that the Muslim supplicates Allah (SWT) by saying, 'O Allah accept from us, for you are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing'.

1. *Zakah* on Articles of Trade

Every Muslim who works in trade should define the cost of the merchandise he has kept aside on the day of calculating *zakah*. If it is a land or a real estate intended to be traded, it should be evaluated on the day of calculating *zakah*. He should pay 2.5 % of the total value of the real estate or the merchandise.

If the Muslim owns a land or a real estate that is not intended to be in traded, he is not to pay *zakah* on it. However, when he sells this land or real estate, he should pay 2.5 % of the selling price as *zakah*. It should be paid right after selling and for once. If he intends to trade in it, then *zakah* would be paid out every *hijri* year.

2- *Zakah* on Plants and Fruits

It comprises everything that is planted by seeds, and eatable (of what is on the trees), or the stemless plants. *Zakah* is due right after harvest, whether on plants or fruits. The planter is the one who is obligated to give it, not the owner of the land. *Zakah* on plants and fruits is 10% of the harvest if the land is irrigated by rain and with no farming. As for the land that is planted using cultivation tools, pesticides, and other kinds of costs, and is irrigated by machinery like a waterwheel and alike, then *zakah* is 5% of the harvest only. The Prophet (SAWS) said, "On that which is watered by the heavens, or by an adjacent water channel, a tithe is due. As for what is irrigated through a well or a stream, its *zakah* is half a tithe."⁶⁴

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth. And do not aim toward the defective there from, spending [from that] while you would not take it [yourself] except with closed eyes. And know that Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy."** (TMQ, 2:267).

According to the scholars, there is no difference between the obligation of *zakah* on plants and fruits. The scholars were only split in assigning the categories that are subject to *zakah* so they choose what is safer. This is according to Hanafi jurisprudence school, which says that any plant is subject to *zakah*, except for firewood, ditch reed, grass, and trees yielding not fruit.

⁶⁴ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

3- Zakah on Animals

Zakah is due on camels, cows, and sheep. There are conditions for these categories to be subject to *zakah*:

- a. To reach *nisab*
- b. To be owned by the person for a full lunar year.

4- Zakah on Rikaaz Treasures and Minerals

Definition of *rikaaz*: It is what the Creator or the creature has hidden in the earth. The word *ma'din* (minerals) is derived from *adana* (resided in a place). Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Gardens of perpetual residence; they will enter them with whoever were righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their descendants. And the angels will enter upon them from every gate, [saying]”** (TMQ, 13:23). These are the Gardens of Eden because they exist eternally.

Definition of Zakah on Rikaaz and Mineral

It means everything that comes out of the earth of a value like gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, or corundum. Reaching *nisab* is a condition; whether in its weight or its value. As for the fluid or the solid that does not melt in fire such as corundum, there is no assigned *nisab* regarding it. Its possessor should pay 20% of it; whether much or little. *Zakah* on this category should be paid whenever it is obtained. It should be paid to the same categories of *zakah* beneficiaries.

Categories that are not permissible to receive *zakah*:

- 1- Disbelievers and atheists.
- 2- The offspring of Hashim⁶⁵ (the sons of Ali, Aqeel, Ja'far, al-Abbas, and al-Harith).
- 3- The father, grandfather, grandchild, and children of the payer of *zakah*. It is because neither the origins, nor the branches of the payer should take *zakah*, as they are, by nature, supported by him.
- 4- The wife, for she is supported by the husband.
- 5- Building mosques, maintaining roads, enshrouding the dead, and any other category but those mentioned in the *ayah*. This can be translated as, **“Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakah] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler - an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise.”** (TMQ, 9:60).

Notes about *zakah*:

- 1- Both the orphan and the sick, if they are poor they would be of the categories of *zakah* beneficiaries.
- 2- The poor should be given full ownership of *zakah*, for it is their right. The payer of *zakah* is not allowed to use *zakah* money to buy clothes, food, or medicine for the poor, unless the poor themselves allow the payer to do so.

⁶⁵ Hashim is the great grandfather of the Prophet (SAWS).

- 3- The able, who provide for themselves are not to receive *zakah*, unless they are of the categories of *zakah* beneficiaries.
- 4- A Muslim has to handle the distribution of *zakah*, and delivering it to its beneficiaries by himself. It is an act of worship, on which he would be rewarded. The *zakah* payer should make sure they do not follow up what they have spent with constant reminders to the poor. It should reach the beneficiaries in the best form, for alms is received first by Allah, before the beneficiary receives it. This obligatory worship should be fulfilled with no slackness, harm, nor any conditions.
- 5- It is preferable to give alms to the righteous, relatives, and neighbors, for the closer ones are the worthier they are to receiving it.
- 6- A Muslim should pay *zakah* in secret and in public, by day or by night, in sorrow or in joy. He should also vary the categories of beneficiaries he pays for.
- 7- *Zakatul-Fitr* (Fast-Breaking *zakah*) is imposed on every Muslim individual, whether young or old, male or female. It is a purification for the fasting person, of what they might have done while fasting, such as vanity or *rafath* (behaving in obscene manner). Every free Muslim should pay it on himself and on behalf of those whom he provides for.
 - a. *Zakatul-Fitr* should be paid at the end of Ramadan and before the *Eid* prayers. Its amount is one *saa'*. *Saa'* = 4 *mudd*. *Mudd* equals a handful of an average man. It is preferable to be in the form of wheat, barley, dates, or raisin.
 - b. A Muslim is never exempt from paying *Zakatul-Fitr* if he delayed it. It is a debt that he must pay before he dies.
 - c. *Zakatul-Fitr* should be paid to the eight categories of beneficiaries defined in the previous *ayah*.
- 8- Whoever possesses *nisab* of any type of wealth and sold, granted all, or part of it intending to escape paying *zakah*, he is never exempt from paying it. He should pay it at the end of *hawl*.
- 9- Is there other dues in one's wealth other than *zakah*?
 - a. Al-Qortoby said, 'Allah (*SWT*) says **“and gives wealth, in spite of love for it”** is a proof that there are other dues in one's wealth other than *zakah*.
 - b. The Messenger (*SAWS*) said, “Indeed there are rights in one's wealth other than *zakah*.”⁶⁶ and then he recited the *ayah* that can be translated as, **“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives *zakah*; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.”** (TMQ, 2:177).

⁶⁶ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And what Allah restored to His Messenger from the people of the towns - it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for [his] near relatives and orphans and the [stranded] traveler - so that it will not be a perpetual distribution among the rich from among you. And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty. (TMQ, 59:7).**

- c. It means that this categorization is meant to avoid perpetual distribution of the money among the rich only.
- d. The desperate one is not the only eligible for this, but also the relatives, for they are the most worthy of keeping good relations with, and being good to them. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.” (TMQ, 4:36).** Allah (*SWT*), also, says, **“And asking them], “What put you into Saqar?”, They will say, “We were not of those who prayed, Nor did we used to feed the poor.” (TMQ, 74:42-44).**

The Messenger (*SAWS*) said, “He who has an extra mount should give that to one who has no mount for him; and he who has surplus of provisions should give them to him who has no provisions, and he made mention of so many kinds of wealth until we were of the opinion that none of us has any right over the surplus.”⁶⁷ they said that he mentioned many types of wealth that we saw that non of us has the right in what is left [after paying *zakah*].

- e. Ali (*RA*)⁶⁸ said, “Allah (*SWT*) obligated the rich to pay from their wealth the amount that is enough for the poor. If the poor have nothing to wear, or suffer, it is because of the rich. Therefore, it is just that Allah (*SWT*) holds them as accountable for that on the Day of Judgment and punishes them.’

***Sadaqa* (Voluntary alms)**

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is All-Encompassing and Knowing.” (TMQ, 2:261).**

He also says, **“Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love. And whatever you spend - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it.” (TMQ, 3:92).**

He (*SWT*) also says, **“Believe in Allah and His Messenger and spend out of that in which He has made you successors. For those who have believed among you and spent, there will be a great reward.” (TMQ, 57:7).**

⁶⁷ Reported by Muslim

⁶⁸ RA= *Radya Allah anhu/anha* [May Allah be pleased with him/her].

Wealth belongs to Allah. The rich are the successors of Allah. He entrusted them with this wealth. The poor are Allah's dependents. If Allah's successors refused to pay Allah's dependents His wealth, so He would punish them. We notice that the noble Qur'an puts faith first, then lawful provision, spending for the sake of Allah, and then the righteous deeds. Eating from the good food succeeded faith and preceded the righteous deeds.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “[Allah said], “O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Indeed, I, of what you do, am Knowing.” (TMQ, 23:51).

Benefits of *sadaqa* for the *sadaqa* giver

- 1- The *sadaqa* giver attains the rank of the righteous; he gains a great reward.
- 2- *Sadaqa* extinguishes Allah's anger, and keeps one from facing a dreadful fate.
- 3- *Sadaqa* makes one lives longer. Through it, Allah (SWT) cures arrogance and haughtiness.
- 4- It purifies its giver's heart.
- 5- He gains the Messenger (SAWS)'s invocations for him. Allah (SWT) says what can be translate as, “Take, [O, Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke [Allah's blessings] upon them. Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.” (TMQ, 9:103).
- 6- Allah compensates the *sadaqa* giver, enlarges it just as the one of us brings up his baby horse. If the *sadaqa* was a loaf of bread, on the Day of Judgment it will become as heavy as the mountain of Uhud.

Types of *sadaqa*

Sadaqa is not restricted to a certain type of the good deeds. Here are some other types of *sadaqa*:

- 1- Helping the grief-stricken
- 2- Doing good deeds
- 3- Abstaining from the evil deeds
- 4- Establishing justice between people disagreeing with each other
- 5- Helping somebody to ride their animal
- 6- Helping somebody by lifting their belongings
- 7- Removing harmful objects from the road
- 8- Saying good words
- 9- Walking to mosques
- 10- *Dhikr*
- 11- Enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice
- 12- Guiding the ones who lost their ways
- 13- The wife's intimate relation with her husband
- 14- Smiling in the face of one's brothers and sisters
- 15- Planting a tree or anything, from which people would eat

The people most worthy of *sadaqa*

- 1- Yourself
- 2- Your household and those whom you provide for
- 3- Relatives, beginning with the closest, whether close to you in work, home (neighbor), or country

Important notes about *sadaqa*

- 1- *Sadaqa* is nullified if the giver hurts the receiver verbally or by action, or if the giver bragged about his *sadaqa*.
- 2- Allah (SWT) does not accept *sadaqa* of unlawful origin. Allah is Good, and accepts only that which is good. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “[Allah said], **“O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Indeed, I, of what you do, am Knowing.”** (TMQ, 23:51).
- 3- A wife is permitted to pay *sadaqa* from her husband's money, if he allowed her so, or else it is not permissible.
- 4- It is permissible to give one's whole wealth as *sadaqa* under the conditions that he is strong, has a source of income, patient, has no debts, has nobody to provide for, or else it is not recommended to do so. Abdul-Rahman Ibn-Awf gave away all his wealth three times. He shared his wealth with others seven times just for the sake of Allah.
- 5- It is permissible to give *sadaqa* to the needy, orphan, captive, and *dhimmy* people⁶⁹.
- 6- *Sadaqa* is permissible to be given to any animate (living being). It was narrated that a prostitute of Israelites, entered paradise because she gave water to a dog. Allah (SWT) thanked her by forgiving her.
- 7- The charitable should be thanked, for he who does not thank people is not thankful to Allah. Whoever makes a good deed, you should reward him. If you are not able to do so, then supplicate for him until you feel that you have thanked him enough. tell him: *Jazakum Allah Khair* (May Allah reward you).

Two precious advices

1- Do something, whose reward would last even after your death. The Messenger (SAWS) said, “When a man dies, his acts come to an end, but three; recurring charity, or knowledge (by which people) benefit, or a pious son, who prays for him (for the deceased).”⁷⁰

Prepare these three things for yourself as you are alive and follow them up. Instruct your children to care for these works to the best they can. Do not wait until you are on your deathbed to instruct your children in your will to do so and so, whether they would do it or not.

2- Every *hijri* year and on the day of calculating your *zakah*, add to it an additional percentage as a *sadaqa*. Accordingly, you would calculate your *zakah* on the basis of three% instead of 2.5%. In the next year, you can make it four%. By this, you gradually increase the money you pay for the sake of Allah (AWJ) a year after the other. Thus, you become closer to Allah, His paradise, and His mercy. It would be counted in your favor, not against you. The best deeds to Allah is the consistent, even if it is few. Do not be of those whom Satan illusions and makes them think they already paid much, while in fact they paid only a little. If they would compare what they spend for the sake of Allah to what He provides them with, they would recognize how little they spent. Yet, still, obligatory *zakah* is 2.5% only.

Which one of these is closer to Allah?

- 1- Someone who pays *zakah*, which is estimated in tens of thousands?
- 2- Someone who pays *zakah*, which is estimated in tens of hundreds only?

⁶⁹ Dhimmy: non-Muslims living under the protection of Muslims or made treaties with Muslims.

⁷⁰ Reported by Muslim

Bearing in mind that both of them possess the same amount of wealth.

- We notice that *zakah* is imposed only on the wealth that has been in the possession of the person for one lunar year, otherwise, wealth is not subject to *zakah*. The legislator's aim is not merely that the rich pay money as it is perceived by many. Rather, the aim is to encourage the rich to increase their spending for the sake of Allah and not to amass wealth for more than one year. Therefore, the Prophet (SAWS) ordered us not to amass wealth to avoid *zakah* consuming it, and to spend it in projects that would benefit the society, provide youth with job opportunities.
- On the other side, *zakah* would be directed toward the categories that are unable to earn their living by themselves. As for the able ones, they would find a good job, through which they would earn lawful provision. It would be enough for them to lead a good life, marry, and make a good family. This is better than him asking people to give him charity. Then, he would be the lower hand instead of being the upper hand.
- The most important right for the poor over the rich is not to amass their wealth and spend it in establishing various projects that would provide lawful job opportunities to earn their living. This is better for them in order to abandon poverty. As for the *zakah* it should be given to those who are unable to earn by themselves like orphans, widows, and the old for whom the society is providing. This decreases the gap between the rich and the poor. On the other hand, this fortifies the labor class, so that the society would increase its production. The per capita income would increase until the society reaches a level in which it is self-sufficient. It would produce everything they need for their consumption. It would move towards exporting the surpluses of the country to other countries. This is the way to fortify the country's economy.

Amassing wealth is the most dangerous thing to society, it results from *riba* (usury)

People may prefer to save their wealth in banks, which provide saving accounts – not investing accounts – because of the annual or monthly interest. They do not want to invest it in trade or partnerships with others; nor establish projects that may need a great effort because its revenue is not guaranteed as it in the case of banks. If people do so, which is already happening, and this wealth is kept away from the market, projects would lessen than before. Job opportunities would decrease. Per capita income would decrease. Poverty would increase. The gap between the poor and the rich would enlarge. An army of the jobless would emerge. They will resort to gaining money through stealing, and cheating. They would become as destructive bombs living in the society, instead of a productive power. A power that constructs and reforms. The rich should know that they are not investing their wealth to become richer, or because of an idea they wish to implement. It is a duty they have to fulfill as long as they have surplus of wealth, which they can invest and not save or amass.

Thus, we see the gravity of usury, which is shown clearly in the Book of Allah (SWT) in what can be translated as, **“Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, “Trade is [just] like interest.” But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists**

may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein. Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever. Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds and establish prayer and give zakah will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers. And if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent, you may have your principal - [thus] you do no wrong, nor are you wronged.” (TMQ, 2:275-279).

Allah did not declare war on anybody but the usurer, for he corrupts the society in such a massive way. The issue is about amassing wealth and keeping it from being exchanged. It is not about using the poor only. The first usury to be nullified in Islam was that of al-Abbas, the Prophet (SAWS)'s uncle. The Prophet (SAWS) nullified it in *hijjat al-Wadaa'* (The farewell pilgrim-the last and only *Hajj* the Prophet (SAWS) performed). Al-Abbas, though, was not using the poor as they came to borrow from him. Tradesmen used to come to him, voluntarily, by the winter and summer trips to borrow money from him that they would return after coming back from their trip. They pay the borrowed amount and the surplus agreed on, regardless of their profit or loss. It does not relate to the trade itself.

This is how modern banks work. They take money from people, lend it to whoever need loans, with interest that is more than that they give to the savers. The unlawfulness of this kind of transactions emerges from different aspects, the most important of which are:

- 1- The fact that the bank gives loan with fixed interest that is not related to the type of the project, and it does not share in it in any way is, undoubtedly, an unlawful action. The bank does so with your own money that you have saved in it, so you are a partner in this sin.
- 2- The most important thing for the bank in loans is the ability of the debtor to pay and that there are enough assets that guarantee the bank's rights. As for the type of the project of the debtor, the bank does not care but for its economic feasibility. If somebody wishes to establish the greatest nightclub or casino in the Middle East, and provided the bank with all their requirements, the bank will not refuse to lend them the money because it is an unlawful work. Thus, bars would be established using your money, as you are saving your money in this bank. You, then, would be a partner in all sins committed in these places. The least that could be said about such places is that it is the meeting place of the human and devils. Many people think mistakenly that banks invest their money. The truth is that it lends it with interest for those who want to set up a project. They do not take part in it. The longer the loan is, the more interest the bank collects, even if the project incurred loss. How many lives were devastated because of usury? The main income for banks is through loans they give, and the interest it takes from debtors.

What we should do to repent from usury

- Repent to Allah and abstain from usury deals.
- All deposits should be transformed into current accounts.
- Calculate all interest received on the capital, for it is *ribba*. You can keep, only, your capital. As for all the interest you have received, it is *ribba* that should be discarded. It could be spent in anything that would benefit Muslims, like paving roads,

establishing hospitals, etc. It should not be spent as *sadaqa*, for Allah is Good, and He does not accept but that which is good. If the amount of *ribba* is large, it could be paid in installments. However, you should assign it, in your will, as a debt, and hasten to pay it.

- You should search among your relatives and friends. You may find that you can be a partner in their projects. You can think with a friend of yours of setting up a project. Let us revive trust amongst us. Be assured that Allah will bless you both.
- If you are unable to do so, you can buy a real estate so you can rent it. You can buy a land and then sell it later, or anything of the sort.
- Keep part of your wealth in cash, deposited in banks. It is preferable to use Islamic banks and current accounts for emergencies.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, repent to Allah with sincere repentance. Perhaps your Lord will remove from you your misdeeds and admit you into gardens beneath which rivers flow [on] the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believed with him. Their light will proceed before them and on their right; they will say, “Our Lord, perfect for us our light and forgive us. Indeed, You are over all things competent.” (TMQ, 66:8).**

Be sure that your provision is predetermined since the beginning of this life. It will not increase nor decrease than what it was determined. However, the servant is tried regarding where he will gain it, how he would spend it. This is what you should take care of, so that your provision would be of lawful source, so that Allah would accept what you spend for His sake, and your good deeds. If you insisted on what you do [of dealing with *ribba*], then know that became one of those on whom Allah, and His Messenger declared war. There will be no blessing in your provision, and it would not increase. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever.” (TMQ, 2:276).**

Summary

If we eradicated usury, so we eradicated amassing wealth. Then money would be pumped into useful projects that would benefit the whole society. We would be saving the poor from the humility of poorness. We would open the doors of lawful provision. We would be truly righteous, reformers, and successors to Allah on Earth as He decreed. As for the wealth amassed and being possessed for a lunar year, it is kept from the market. We could compensate the poor by paying 2.5% of it.

The most worthy of this *zakah* is the categories of those who are unable to earn their living through lawful channels - of the eight categories - prescribed in the previous *ayat*. As for the poor, yet able to earn their living, by this, we would establish beneficial projects for them, through which they would gain lawful provision.

Each one of us should be assured that Allah (SWT) blesses the works made for His sake. He facilitates things for those who seek His contentment. Whoever searches for good, he will be given good. He will not regret his obedience to Allah. Whoever abandons something for the sake of Allah, He will give them better than what he abandoned. Whoever repents their sins is as if they did not commit sins.

Zakah on Time

The majority of Muslims know that *zakah* is paid on wealth only. However, what is new is that it is not restricted to wealth only, it includes everything Allah (SWT) Has given you. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.”** (TMQ, 28:77).

Allah (AWJ) ordered Muslim to utilize each blessing He has given them, such as health, time, children, wife/husband, vehicle, and house as a means of preparing for paradise. This comes through dedicating it for the benefit of the people, doing good for them. It also includes doing good to animals and plants, for there is a *sadaqa* in every animate.

In the previous ayah, Allah orders Muslim to benefit from a part the blessings of Allah. This is their share in this worldly life. The rest they would dedicate it, totally and completely for the others. This is the *ihsan* (doing good) that the *ayah* meant. As Allah (SWT) has done good to you, gave you a blessing, then you should in return, give of it to the others. This is how you would be doing good as Allah has done good to you. This *ihsan* should not be accompanied by any kind of harm.

Time is the human's capital. If time does not exist, then the whole life would not exist. Man would not be able to achieve anything, without Time. The wise legislator ordained for us a minimum limit of spending in all types of wealth.

- 1- 2 and 0.5% is *zakah* on money and articles of trade.
- 2- 5% is *zakah* on plants that is being planted with effort, costs, and farming.
- 3- 10% is *zakah* on plants in which no effort, cost was used to plant them.
- 4- 20% is *zakah* on *rikaaz* and minerals.

A Muslim should devote, even the minimum amount of time for the others while he should not benefit at all from this time. This should be, not only in every day, but also, in every hour of his life. This is the minimum limit that increases gradually whenever the servant wanted to become closer to his Lord (AWJ). If we are to calculate this minimum limit, it would be like the *nisab* of *zakah*; equals 2.5% to 20% of one's time.

We should understand the wisdom behind increasing the amount of obligatory *zakah* on certain types of wealth than the rest. We may notice that the less the effort exerted in gaining a certain type of wealth, the more amount of *zakah* is to be paid, and vice versa. It is clearly manifested in *zakah* on plants. If we considered time as a blessing, in which a human does not exert effort to gain, then it would be like *rikaaz* and minerals, whose *zakah* is 20%. Therefore, we consider it more probable that *zakah* on time would be 20% of a Muslim's time. This percentage should be dedicated to the beneficence of the others. They would keep 80% for themselves. This is their share in this worldly life. The closer the servant becomes to his Lord, the more time they dedicate for the beneficence of the others.

Form our point of view; if the time dedicated is less than 20%, then the Muslim has failed in fulfilling *zakah* on time. It makes no sense that we care for paying *zakah* on different types of wealth, yet neglect that on time, which is the origin of all types of wealth. All *ayat* order to pay *zakah*. They do not specify the type of *zakah*, so as to avoid restriction. The beginning of al-Baqarah described the pious as what can be translated as, **“Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for.”** (TMQ, 2:3).

Thus, spending meant to be from everything Allah Has provided you with. Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, spend from that which We have provided for you before there comes a Day in which there is no exchange and no friendship and no intercession. And the disbelievers - they are the wrongdoers.”** (TMQ, 2:254).

Allah (SWT) says, **“Not upon you, [O Muhammad], is [responsibility for] their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever good you [believers] spend is for yourselves, and you do not spend except seeking the countenance of Allah. And whatever you spend of good - it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.”** (TQM, 2:272).

On the other hand, the Muslim who may not possess *nisab*, or they possess it for less than a lunar year, how, then would he spend out? What would he spend if he does not have other channels to spend for the sake of Allah?

Here we emphasize the significance of treating time as we treat wealth. To make a minimum limit of spending out of this time to dedicate to the others. We should spend less than what we assigned. We should know that this is obligatory.

Dedicating this time for the others comes through different channels, to help Muslims, advise, visit, and share them in their happiness or sorrow. It could also, be through teaching them or any other work that would benefit the others, even if it is a pet, for as long as you, yourself, do not benefit from this work or this time in any way. It is better that nobody would know about what you have spent or on whom. Spend out throughout the day. Try to encompass as many people as you can, whether Muslims in particular or non-Muslims. The longer the effect of your work lasts, and the more beneficence it has, the more reward you gain from Allah (SWT).

How the Muslim pays *zakah* on time?

- A Muslim should calculate *zakah* on his time as he does with his wealth. It should be dedicated to Muslims. It should be paid in certain time on regular basis, whether daily, weekly, or monthly to compensate what they did not pay of *zakah* during the month. Such time should be spent according to what the others need not to your needs. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “In the morning alms are due from every bone in man's body. His salutation to everyone he meets is *sadaqa*; his enjoining good is *sadaqa*; his forbidding what is evil is *sadaqa*; the removal of a harmful thing from the way is *sadaqa*; to have sexual intercourse with one's wife is *sadaqa*.’ They (the people) said, O Messenger of Allah, how is it that one of us fulfils his desire and still this is *sadaqa*? He replied, ‘What do you think if he had unlawful sexual intercourse; would he not have been a sinner?’ Then he said, “and two *rak'aa* which one prays in the forenoon serve instead of that. ⁷¹

These are but examples of how to dedicate time for the others, even for a second, in which you would smile, thus bring happiness to them. Maybe using the word *sadaqa* in *hadith* is to draw the reader's attention to the relation between *zakah* on wealth and *zakah* on time. Time is the origin of the wealth you generate. To pay *zakah* on time, the Muslim dedicates his health, knowledge, and the rest of the blessings of Allah for the beneficence of Muslims. Thus, *zakah* on wealth, in essence, is *zakah* on time. The payer gives out a part of his time, in which he gained this wealth, to the poor. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as,

⁷¹ Reported by Abu-Dawud

“Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? So rejoice in your transaction which you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment.” (TMQ, 9:111).

The Muslim has sold themselves to Allah that they sacrificed their entire life to Allah in different aspects. This manifests clearly in *jihad*⁷² (struggle) for the sake of Allah, elevation of Islam and Muslims. They gave away their entire life, so *zakah* on time has reached its utmost level. They spent the entire of their life on the others; this is reason why *jihad* is at the highest rank in Islam.

How a Muslim calculates *zakah* on his time?

- Allah Has blessed a Muslim with time. His lifetime, ranges from sixty to seventy, as it was mentioned in the *hadith* of the Prophet (SAWS). Thus, the minimum amount of time to be dedicated to the others is its fifth. It means that the *zakah* of his lifetime- assuming that his lifetime is 65 years- is 13 years. If we distributed it, equally, over years, the share of each year: $12 \text{ months} \div 5 = 365 \text{ days} / 5 = 73 \text{ days per year}$. It equals around two months, 13 days. If we distributed it evenly over months, the share of each month $30 \text{ days} / 5 = 6 \text{ days per month}$. If is to be distributed evenly over days, the share of each day: $24 \text{ hours} / 5 = 24 \times 60 \text{ minutes} / 5 = 288 \text{ minutes} = 4 \text{ hours and } 84 \text{ minutes per day}$. If it is to be distributed evenly over the hours, *zakah* of time would be 12 minutes per hour.
- If we are unable to spend 12 minutes per hour, so we can make it in the next hour, or even on the next day. All that we should care for is that we reach the *nisab*; that is 20 percent of our total time. I would recommend that we pay *zakah* on time accompanied with the daily five prayers. Around each prayer we could spend $[288 \text{ minutes} / 5 =]$ around 57 minutes. If there is no chance to spend this time on the others, so we can spend it on ourselves. We can occupy ourselves with *dhikr*, reciting the Qur'an, attending to knowledge gatherings. This recommendation is in accordance with that poor man, whom the Prophet (SAWS) excused to eat from his own *zakah*, as he had nothing to eat.
- As Muslims, we should start to dedicate *zakah* on our time by 2.5%. Then we gradually increase it by accompanying it with the five daily prayers. We would start by 7 minutes (2.5%) with each prayer, then double it to 14 minutes (five %) then double it once more to be 28 minutes (10%) then double it to reach 56 minutes around each prayer, that is at the end it would reach 20%.
- At the end of the day, we would count the total amount of time spent as *zakah*. If we still have some time that we are yet to spend, then we can make it on the next day, or at the weekend. We should not save effort to attain such level. By this, we would watch ourselves coming closer to Allah (SWT). Spending [for the sake of Allah] is a proof of our love to Allah, and the need to be close to Him. Whoever claims he is close to Allah, and yet he spends no time for His sake, is dishonest. As we have mentioned earlier, that there is no harm if we counted the time we spend in *dhikr*, recitation of the Qur'an, seeking knowledge among the *zakah* on time. We can even,

⁷² Jihad: Any earnest striving in the way of Allah, involving personal, physical, intellectual or military effort, for righteousness and against wrong-doing. “Lesser Jihad”: fighting to protect Islam from attack or oppression. In such fighting, no woman, child or innocent civilian is to be harmed, and no tree is to be cut down. “Greater Jihad”: internal struggle for the soul (nafs) against evil and temptation.

count our *Hajj* and *Umrah*. After all, it is times that we spend for the sake of Allah. The remembrance of Allah should result in good deeds that benefit the others. Thus, *dhikr* would be the first step towards preparing the Muslim to spend some of his time for the benefit of the other who is in need for it. At the end of the month, we should count the time we are yet to spend, so we can spend it on the next month. If the Muslim did not spend the amount of time he assigned to himself, which exceeds 2.5 %, it would become a debit that is due as soon as he has enough time to it. This is why the Messenger (SAWS) said, “Two blessings many people lack for; free time and health.” We should make use of our leisure time to compensate for the time, in which we have been busy. We should consider *zakah* on time as we consider *zakah* on wealth.

Increasing the amount of *zakah* on time

As Muslims, we should pay due *zakah* during our lifetime. Time spent consistently to compensate for other times, during which we have been busy, whether weekly, monthly, or annually. This is the minimum amount we are obligated to spend. We should even exert more effort to increase the time we spend, whenever it is possible.

The most beloved deeds to Allah are the consistent ones, even if they were a few. Therefore, we should increase the percentage of our spending gradually from 20% to 22%. We could keep at this level for a while, and then increase it to 24% for example. We should not hasten the process. Consistency and regularity is all that counts. It is like a stairway to Allah (SWT). Each time we spend money or time for the sake of Allah, we come closer to paradise and farther from hellfire. This is, in fact, a good measure, by which we would know our rank regarding Allah. How near we are from His acceptance and contentment. It is like the *ayat* of the Qur'an, which we will recite on the Day of Judgment. The more *ayat* we recite, the higher we reach in paradise.

This connection between spending and time would give the Muslim an honest measurement for his good deeds and worship. It is not merely a matter of the number of *rak'aa* he prays, or number of *sura* he memorizes or recites. Rather, it is the time the Muslim spends for the sake of Allah that counts; whether in *dhikr* or benefiting people. Reward increases the more time is spent for the sake of Allah, even if the prayer spent hours reciting just one ayah of the Qur'an or learning one religious issue. Quantity is not what really counts. The Muslim, who bought paradise, had already paid for it from his lifetime. What is left for us in this worldly life is just 80 % out of the buyer's courtesy. It is not because we deserve it.

The owner of all your time, originally, is Allah (AWJ). What a generous Lord He is. He grants us blessings, buys it from us, and then lets us enjoy it. When we use it in His worship, He rewards us for it. As for the human being, he wants to enter paradise, and yet he feels it is too much to pay 20% of his time as Allah wants; for the benefit of the others. He is not contented with the 80% left for him. We should know that the first sign of miserliness is when we hate to spend our time in the cause of Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “**So fear Allah as much as you are able and listen and obey and spend [in the way of Allah]; it is better for your selves. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.**” (TMQ, 64:16).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“Here you are - those invited to spend in the cause of Allah - but among you are those who withhold [out of greed]. And whoever withholds only withholds [benefit] from himself; and Allah is the Free of need, while you are the needy. And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be the likes of you.”** (TMQ, 47:38).

We know that, every day, there is an angel who says, “O Allah, whoever spends [in your cause] reward him on what he spent.” There is another angel who says, “O Allah, whoever refrained from spending [in your cause], take away blessings from him.” The time we spend in the cause of Allah returns back to us. It never wastes your time. It is like *sadaqa*. When you give *sadaqa*, your wealth never decreases. Each moment we spend for the sake of Allah, He, fully, returns it back to us. He also blesses the rest of your lifetime.

Allah (SWT) said in a *hadith qudsi*, “Spend (O man), and I shall spend on you.”⁷³

We should trust in what is in the Hands of Allah more than in what we have in our own hands; spend in His cause; never fear the Lord would deprive us. We should remember this advice and spend our time for His sake. Calculate this time as you calculate *zakah* on your wealth. Never let Satan distract you from anything that would help you keep vigilante in your relation with Allah. Nobody knows what is hidden in the future. Allah (SWT) only knows. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“So flee to Allah . Indeed, I am to you from Him a clear warner.”** (TMQ, 51:50).

He also says, **“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous. Who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good.”** (TMQ, 3:133-134).

Read, my dear reader, what the Qur'an says about giving which is the equal of spending in the following, **“As for he who gives and fears Allah, and believes in the best [reward], We will ease him toward ease. But as for he who withholds and considers himself free of need, and denies the best [reward], and what will his wealth avail him when he falls? Indeed, [incumbent] upon Us is guidance. And indeed, to Us belongs the Hereafter and the first [life]. So I have warned you of a Fire which is blazing. None will [enter to] burn therein except the most wretched one. Who had denied and turned away. But the righteous one will avoid it - [He] who gives [from] his wealth to purify himself. And not [giving] for anyone who has [done him] a favor to be rewarded. But only seeking the countenance of his Lord, Most High. And he is going to be satisfied.”** (TMQ, 92:5-21).

Some scholars interpreted the word 'his wealth' as all what one possesses, not only money. Thus, the most pious give all he possesses to the others. This type of giving purifies his soul, for it is for the sake of Allah. His reward would be to win Allah's contentment.

Conclusion

To conclude this discussion about *zakah*, as an obligatory worship, we can summarize it in the following points:

- 1- Remember, dear reader that a Muslim cannot fulfill this obligation, which is one of the pillars of Islam, unless his provision is of lawful sources, which Allah accepts. Therefore, let us reconsider our work, through which we earn our living; one feeds his

⁷³ Reported by al-Bukhary

wife and children, whether it is lawful or unlawful. If we suspected it, so we have to leave it, and be quite certain that whoever left something [unlawful] for the sake of Allah, Allah will grant him better than what he had.

- 2- Allah (*SWT*) puts people's wealth in such a high level of respect. Therefore, being unjust to people and taking their wealth in unlawful ways, like stealing it; not paying them their money back; paying it in a lesser amount than what is due, or even hindering people's rights to reach them, all of it is considered unjust. We should know that abandonment precedes adornment. It means that paying back people's rights should precede paying *zakah* and *sadaqa*. We have to hasten before we are faced with death. Then we would be unjust. Unjust is darkness on the Day of Judgment.
- 3- Pay *sadaqa* to elevate yourself from the level of the self that enjoins evil to a reproaching self, and then to a secured self.
- 4- We should know that whoever withholds only withholds from himself. *Sadaqa* never decreases wealth. Rather it doubles and multiplies it. If we are seeking the love of Allah, let us lead a pious life. If we wish people to love us, abstain from asking them of what they have.
- 5- Most of the disputes between Muslims are because of wealth. Make sure you do not fall in this trap. Keep an open door of love between you and the others. Wealth in Arabic is called 'mal'. 'Mal' also means incline. It is called *mal* because its possessor inclines towards it, out of his great love for wealth. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And you love wealth with immense love.” (TMQ, 89:20)**. He also says, **“And indeed he is, in love of wealth, intense.” (TMQ, 100:8)**. He (*SWT*) also says, **“Say, [O Muhammad], “If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.” (TMQ, 9:24)**. Uproot the love for wealth from your heart. Be sufficed by the Superb Provider, the Superb Bestower. Ask Him to make you always of the upper hand [that gives], and not the lower hand [that takes].
- 6- We should hasten to repent of usury of all types. *Riba* is of the gravest sins of all. Therefore, it is better that we invest our money by ourselves, or cooperate with friends or relatives to establish any kind of lawful business. These businesses would, at least, provide job opportunities. This is our obligation towards the poor. If we would keep our money in banks, though, we should keep it in current accounts, not as deposits. This is the least we can do. Yet, we should be careful not to leave it in the bank until it is consumed by *zakah* [paid every year, without any increase of the amount saved].

Three: *Sawm* (Fasting)

1- Meaning of fasting.

- Linguistic meaning: abstain from something. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“So eat and drink and be contented. And if you see from among humanity anyone, say, 'Indeed, I have vowed to the Most Merciful abstention, so I will not speak today to [any] man.’”** (TMQ, 19:26). Mary’s abstention from speaking was fasting.
- Legislative meaning: abstain from eating/drinking and sexual relations from dawn to sunset.

2- Legitimacy of fasting

Allah (*SWT*) ordered all Muslims, male and female to fast in the month of Ramadan, unless one has an excuse. Allah (*SWT*) says, in *surat* al-Baqarah, what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous - [Fasting for] a limited number of days. So whoever among you is ill or on a journey [during them] - then an equal number of days [are to be made up]. And upon those who are able [to fast, but with hardship] - a redemption [as substitute] of feeding a poor person [each day]. And whoever volunteers excess - it is better for him. But to fast is best for you, if you only knew. The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful. And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided. It has been made permissible for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]. They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them. Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you. So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allah has decreed for you. And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread [of night]. Then complete the fast until the sunset. And do not have relations with them as long as you are staying for worship in the mosques. These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them. Thus does Allah make clear His ordinances to the people that they may become righteous.”** (TMQ, 2:183-187).

The Wise Legislator gave permissions to patients and travelers not to fast as the following:

- 1- The traveler: dawn is the time in which the intention of fasting is set. Therefore, it is permissible for a traveler not to fast, only if he started his journey before dawn. If he started it after dawn, he is not considered a traveler. The traveler should make up for the days he did not fast, right after Ramadan. He should not make up for them before the next Ramadan.
- 2- The patient: he is only excused from fasting if his illness intensifies by fasting. This should be according to the advice of a professional Muslim physician. Then, making up would be after recovery. If it is an incurable disease, then, for everyday he does not fast, he should feed a poor Muslim, twice [*iftar* (breakfast) and *suhoor* (a pre-dawn meal)]. Food should be of the best kinds he has; of which his own family eats. This is called *it'aam* (feeding).

3- The able but with hardship: they are the people who are able to fast but with great hardship such as the old people. Allah permitted them not to fast. They, however, should feed a poor or a needy everyday. Women, who are pregnant or nursing are included in this type. Thus, every Muslim is his own judge. Allah is the All-Knowing of our circumstances.

4- The reality of fasting

Fasting is the abstention from doing things that are lawful in other times than Ramadan. If we did it in Ramadan, we are considered *mufter* (non-fasting). We should make up for it then after Ramadan. In some cases, a Muslim should also expiate for it by fasting two consecutive months in repentance to Allah. What about the things that are originally sins, whether in Ramadan or out of it? Would the Muslim then be a non-fasting? Sure. The Messenger (SAWS) said, “Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting).”⁷⁴

Abu-Hurairah narrated that the Messenger (SAWS) said, “Allah said, 'All the deeds of Adam's sons (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.' Fasting is a shield or protection from the fire and from committing sins. If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relation with his wife and quarreling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hands my soul is 'The unpleasant smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. There are two pleasures for the fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord; then he will be pleased because of his fasting.’”⁷⁵

Fasting, originally, lasts for 30 or 29 consecutive days. Fasting begins on seeing the crescent of Ramadan and ends on seeing the crescent of *shawwal*. It is like the prayer, which begins with *takbeer*, and ends with *tasleem* (saying: *as-Salamu alaykom*). If the praying person made a mistake in the third *rak'aa*, then his prayer is null, even if he reached the last *tashahhud*. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful.”** (TMQ, 2:185). It means he should fast in Ramadan. A Muslim should also know that the fasting of Ramadan ends by the coming of *Eid al-Fitr* (The Feast of Breaking the Fast). The Messenger (SAWS) said, “There are two pleasures for the fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord; then he will be pleased because of his fasting.”⁷⁶

2- Ramadan is the month of fasting. It is also the month in which the Qur'an was revealed unto the Messenger (SAWS) in the cave of mount Hira', when He (SWT) revealed what can be translated as, **“Recite in the name of your Lord who created - Created man from a clinging substance.”** (TMQ, 96:1-2).

⁷⁴ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary

⁷⁵ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary and Muslim

⁷⁶ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary and Muslim

Fasting is strongly connected with the noble Qur'an. It shows in Allah (SWT) chose the great month of Ramadan for the Qur'an to be revealed in. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful.”** (TMQ, 2:185).

The Qur'an was brought to earth (by Jibril), in its complete form, from the Preserved Tablet to the lower heaven in *laylat al-Qadr* (The Night of Decree). Then it started to be revealed, in separate *ayat* (verses). The previous *ayat* were the first to be revealed. Here comes the secret of fasting in Ramadan, and the secret of Ramadan having *laylat al-Qadr*, which is better than a thousand months, and the secret of revealing the noble Qur'an in *laylat al-Qadr*. It tells us that there is no way to be obedient and close to Allah unless we are close to the noble Qur'an. Being attached to the Qur'an, loving it, and following its orders is in fact being attached to Allah (AWJ), loving Him, and following His orders. We will be discussing the noble Qur'an in details, later when we talk about Allah (AWJ). This is the reason that *qiyam* (voluntary night prayer) in the nights of Ramadan is integral to fasting in the morning.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, ““Whoever established prayers on *laylat al-Qadr* out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven; and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven.”⁷⁷

The secret of *qiyam* is the noble Qur'an that is recited in prayers. Therefore, the Prophet (SAWS) taught us that both fasting and the Qur'an, on the Day of Judgment, would intercede for the Muslim.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “The fast and the Qur'an are two intercessors for the servant on the Day of Judgment. The Fast will say, 'O Allah, I prevented him from his food and desires during the day [of Ramadan]. Let me intercede for him.' The Qur'an then will say, 'O Allah, I prevented him from sleeping at night. Let me intercede for him.' The Messenger (SAWS) then said, 'and their intercession will be accepted.’”⁷⁸

The noble Qur'an is integral to fasting; whether in Ramadan or out of Ramadan. We could reach for Allah by reciting, memorizing, applying, contemplating, and learning from the noble Qur'an.

Fasting should have an impact on the fasting person's self. It should teach him *giving*. It was mentioned in the *hadith* that the Messenger (SAWS) was more generous than a fast wind [which causes rain and welfare]. He (SAWS) was most generous in Ramadan. Therefore, *zakatul-Fitr* (alms of breaking the fast) was imposed on Muslims. We can pay it anytime until before the imam mounts the *minbar* (pulpit) in the prayers of the feast to give the *Eid* paryer speech. It is a purification for the fasting person from whatever he committed during fasting. One's fasting keeps hanging between the earth and the heavens [not being accepted by Allah] until he pays *zakatul-Fitr*. It should be for him and on behalf of whom he provides for. Abu-Hurairah (RA) narrated that the Messenger (SAWS) said, “When there comes the

⁷⁷ Authentic *hadith* reported by al-Bukhary

⁷⁸ Reported by Ahmad, at-Tabarany al-Kabeer with authentic chain of narrators

month of Ramadan, the gates of mercy are opened, and the gates of Hell are locked and the devils are chained.”⁷⁹ Whoever performs obligatory worship in Ramadan receives rewards of 70 obligatory worships. Whoever performs voluntary worships in Ramadan receives the reward of obligatory worship.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “[to the companions] 'Bring the pulpit.' We brought it. When he mounted the first step he said, 'Amen'. Then he mounted the second step and said, 'Amen'. Then he mounted the third step and said, 'Amen'. When he descended, we asked him, 'O Messenger of Allah, we heard from you today something that we have never heard from you before.' He said, 'Jibril (AS) came to me and said, 'Woe to those who attended Ramadan and yet they are not forgiven,' so I said 'Amen,'. Then Jibril said, 'Woe to those before whom you [Muhammad] are mentioned yet they did not say: may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him,' so I said 'Amen,' When I reached the third step Jibril said, 'Woe to those whose parent, or both of them are old, and yet they did not make him enter paradise [because they did not gain their parents' contentment], so I said 'Amen'“⁸⁰

The relation between fasting, closeness to Allah, and answering one's supplications

Here, we notice that within the *ayat* of fasting, comes what Allah (SWT) says and can be translated as, “**And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.**” (TMQ, 2:186). It proves Allah's nearness to His servant when he is fasting. The unpleasant smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. Therefore, one of the answered supplications is the supplication of the fasting person during his fast and when he breaks his fast. Allah is near to all Muslims, but the problem is in the nearness of the Muslim to Allah. Allah answers whoever supplicates Him, especially if they are fasting and in the month of Ramadan. Let us increase our supplications in this noble month. Let us fast in Ramadan as Allah (AWJ) wishes us to fast.

4- Fasting in times other than Ramadan

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Allah said, 'I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine. The most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined upon him. My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing *nawafil* (praying or doing extra deeds beside what is obligatory) until I love him. Thus, I become his sense of hearing with which he hears; his sense of sight with which he sees; his hand with which he grips; his leg with which he walks. If he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks My protection (refuge), I will protect him; (i.e. give him My refuge). I do not hesitate to do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer, for he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him”⁸¹

It is an obligation on every Muslim to make *qadaa'* for all the days they missed fasting in Ramadan, whether because of traveling, sickness, pregnancy, or menstruation. Whoever breaks his fast during Ramadan without having an excuse accepted by Allah, then even a perpetual fast, if he were to fast it, would not make up for that day. We should even increase the days of voluntary fasting for its great reward. Allah prepared for the fasting people a gate in paradise called ar-Rayyan. Fasting people enter paradise through this gate on the Day of Judgment. It closes behind them after they are all in Paradise.

⁷⁹ Authentic hadith reported by Muslim

⁸⁰ Reported by al-Hakim. He said, it is authentic.

⁸¹ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary

It was mentioned in the *hadith qudsi*, on the authority of Abu-Huraira (RA) that the Messenger (SAWS) said, ““Allah said, 'All the deeds of Adam's sons (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.' Fasting is a shield or protection from the fire and from committing sins. If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relation with his wife and quarreling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, the unpleasant smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allah than the smell of musk. There are two pleasures for the fasting person, one at the time of breaking his fast, and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord; then he will be pleased because of his fasting.”⁸²

Advantages of fasting

- 1- Restraining one's desires and inclinations. The Messenger (SAWS) said, 'O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry, should marry, and whoever is not able to marry, is recommended to fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.’⁸³
- 2- Strengthening the habit of *dhikr* during the day. Hunger and thirst makes the Muslim more watchful to himself and his actions regarding his relation with Allah. This increases piety in him. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous.”** (TMQ, 2:183). Fasting makes the Muslim more caring towards others. It increases his desire to help them, whether they deserve it or not. It generates honesty in the public or in secrecy, for nobody knows about his fasting except for Allah (SWT). The Messenger (SAWS) said, “Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, would say on the Day of Resurrection, 'O son of Adam, I was sick but you did not visit Me,' He would say, 'O my Lord; how could I visit You while You Are the Lord of the worlds?' Thereupon He would say, 'Didn't you know that such and such servant of Mine was sick but you did not visit him, and were you not aware of this that if you had visited him, you would have found Me by him? O son of Adam, I asked food from you but you did not feed Me,' He would say, 'My Lord, how could I feed You while You Are the Lord of the worlds?' He said, 'Didn't you know that such and such servant of Mine asked food from you but you did not feed him, and were you not aware that if you had fed him you would have found Me by his side?' (The Lord would again say), 'O son of Adam, I asked drink from you but you did not provide Me,' He would say, 'My Lord, how could I provide You while You Are the Lord of the worlds?' Thereupon He would say, 'Such and such servant of Mine asked you for a drink but you did not provide him, and had you provided him drink you would have found Me near him.’⁸⁴

Lady Aisha (RA) used to perfume the money before giving it to the poor. They asked her about the reason. She said, “I knew that *sadaqa* reaches first the Hand of Allah before it reaches the hand of the poor, so I loved that my *sadaqa* would reach the Hand of Allah in its best form.” Therefore, Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over? And it is Allah who withholds and grants abundance, and to Him you will be returned.”** (TMQ, 2:245).

⁸² Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary

⁸³ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary

⁸⁴ Authentic hadith reported by Muslim

- 3- Fasting has a great social advantage on the level of the Muslim family and the Muslim *Ummah* (nation). It gathers them all on the tables while breaking their fast, as they all fast in the same time and perform congregational prayers as well. Fasting gathers them for a whole month after being separated throughout the year. It betters their relations, unifies them, and fortifies their belonging to their religion. It helps every Muslim feel the responsibility he has towards his Muslim brother.
- 4- Fasting helps abandoning smoking which a billion and two hundred million person in the world suffer from. About 36 million people die every year because of diseases caused by smoking. Smoking is prohibited because of its lethal effect on the health of the smoker and the non-smoker alike. Smokers around the world spend 4.6 billion pounds on smoking. Among them, there are half a million child, who destroy their health since their very childhood. Therefore, I would advice smokers, whatever they smoke, to resort to fasting to help them get rid of this sin. Quitting smoking would protect one's self, his children, and the people living around, who inhale the smoke day and night. Dear Muslim brother, seek the help of Allah and He will help you, for whoever sought good, he would gain it.

Five: undesirable fast, and days that is *sunnah* to fast in

Undesirable fast: it is undesirable to fast all the time continually with no break of fast in between. Also *wisal* (linked) to continue fasting day and night. The Muslim would abstain from eating after sunset until the dawn of the next day. Thus, he spends days with no food or drink. The Messenger (*SAWS*) clarified that this is an attribute assigned only to him. He said, "I am not like you, for I am provided with food and drink (by Allah)."⁸⁵

- Days that are *sunnah* to fast in:
 - i. Fasting the ninth day of Dhul-Hijjah, which is the Day of Arafat for the people who are not performing *Hajj*.
 - ii. Fasting the tenth day of Muharram. It is the day of Ashoura', in which Allah saved Musa (*AS*) from drowning. It is *Sunnah* to fast one day before and after it in order not to imitate the Jews.
 - iii. Fasting the 13th, 14th, and 15th of every *hijry* month.
 - iv. Fasting six days of Shawwal. It was mentioned in the authentic hadith that the Prophet (*SAWS*) told Muslims that whoever fasts Ramadan and then six days of Shawwal is as if he fasted for eternity. Fasting Ramadan equals fasting ten months. Fasting six days of Shawwal equals fasting sixty days [each *hasanah* (reward) = 10 folds]. This equals two months. Thus, whoever fasts Ramadan followed by six days of Shawwal [whether successively or separately] would be as if they fasted 12 months; it is like eternity.
 - v. Fasting every Monday and Thursday. Our deeds ascend to Allah (*AWJ*) in these days.

It is also desirable to fast in the following days:

- 1- The first nine days of Dhul-Hijjah for the non-pilgrims. The Messenger (*SAWS*) said, "No deed is more virtuous than deeds on these days." The companions asked, 'Not even *Jihad* (fighting in Allah's Cause)?' He (*SAWS*) replied, "Not even *Jihad* for the sake of Allah, unless a man goes out risking himself and his wealth for the sake of Allah, and does not come back with anything."⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhary

⁸⁶ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

- 2- Fasting in the sacred months (Dhul-Qi'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab). The best type of fasting is that of Prophet Dawud (AS) (David). He used to fast every other day. I would recommend dear Muslim brother that you keep a habit of fasting. You could begin with fasting just three days every *hijry* month (13th, 14th, and 15th). After you are used to it, gradually increase the days of fasting according to your ability. Remember, Allah intends ease for us and does not intend hardship. The most beloved deeds to Allah are those, which are consistent even if few. I would also advice you to watch yourself. When you sin, or you have been overcome by your desires, fast until you feel that you have regained your power over yourself. Fast because by this you are following sins with good deeds which erase sins. This is the cure. Yourself suffices you as a reckoner.

Be aware, dear Muslim brother, that fasting is an exercise of abstention from everything prohibited by Allah. It is like *zakah*, which is an exercise of *giving* and spending on others out of Allah's bounties. Fasting is for abandonment and *zakah* is for adornment. Abandonment precedes adornment, and both are obligatory.

Six: general guidelines for the fasting person

Fasting should not be a mere habit; performed unintentionally. It was mentioned in the hadith that one should fast out of sincere faith and hoping for the reward of Allah. Intention is the pillar of fasting. The fasting person should fast out of faith and hope for the reward of Allah. He cannot fast out of imitation, mere habit, fearing from people, or even fast without setting his intention. This way, he would be fasting not knowing to whom and why he is fasting. Fasting should be for the sake of Allah only. The Messenger (SAWS) said, "Allah the Most High and Exalted said, 'I am the One, One Who does not stand in need of a partner. If anyone does anything in which he associates anyone else with Me, I shall abandon him with one whom he associates with Allah.'" ⁸⁷ Allah (SWT) says at the end of *surat* al-Kahf what can be translated as, **"Say, 'I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your god is one God. So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.'" (TMQ, 18:110).**

- 1- Fasting people in non-Muslim countries should fast according to the timetable of the nearest Muslim country. This is in case they are unable to fast according to the time zone of their country.
- 2- The most important thing a fasting person should do is to abstain from being unjust to people in any way. He should be careful not to harm anyone even unintentionally. People's blood, wealth, and honor are sanctified. There is no excuse for anybody to harm them. Therefore, the one who kills by mistake has to be punished. He is still responsible for what he did. The same applies to harming people by stealing, backbiting, calumny, denying people's rights, concealing a testimony. The more people are harmed, the more burdens the unjust person would bear. The Messenger (SAWS) said, "Be on your guard against committing oppression, for oppression is darkness on the Day of Resurrection,"⁸⁸ Be careful from the supplication of the oppressed. There is no screen between it and Allah. It ascends to Him that He says, "By My Glory and Magnificence, I will grant you victory even after a while."

⁸⁷ Reported by Muslim

⁸⁸ Reported by Muslim

- 3- The great month of Ramadan is an opportunity for the Muslim to exercise how to be as Allah (SWT) wants him to be, in his actions and sayings until it becomes a second nature. He would abide by it after Ramadan. When the next Ramadan would come, he would be in a better level. Thus, his soul would be elevated and purified. However, if the Muslim returns to his old habit after Ramadan, it means that he did not benefit from his fasting. He did not gain out of it but hunger and thirst. We should be careful not to be of such type of people.

The reward of fasting

On the Day of Judgment, Allah (SWT) would say to the fasting people, after they enter paradise through the gate of ar-Rayyan, what can be translated as, “[**They will be told**], **'Eat and drink in satisfaction for what you put forth in the days past.'**” (TMQ, 69:24). It means that He would feed them from the fruits of paradise, which look like the fruits of the worldly life. Whenever they are provided with a provision of fruit therefrom, they will say, “This is what we were provided with before.” It is given to them in likeness. They will have therein purified spouses, who look like their wives in the worldly life, but with more beauty. Paradise is beyond our imagination. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Allah said, “I have prepared for My pious slaves things which have never been seen by an eye, or heard by an ear, or imagined by a human being.”⁸⁹ Therefore, we should not deprive ourselves from such a great reward. The Messenger (SAWS) said, ““Indeed, anyone who fasts for one day for Allah's Pleasure, Allah will keep his face away from the (Hell) fire for (a distance covered by a journey of) seventy years.” Allah will do this as a reward for fasting one day. How needy we are for fasting. We need to increase the deeds that bring us closer to Allah, instead of committing what brings us closer to hellfire. How true is the fact that paradise is surrounded by hardships, while hellfire is surrounded by desires.

The Qur'an proved that fasting is good. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “[**Fasting for**] **a limited number of days. So whoever among you is ill or on a journey [during them] - then an equal number of days [are to be made up]. And upon those who are able [to fast, but with hardship] - a ransom [as substitute] of feeding a poor person [each day]. And whoever volunteers excess - it is better for him. But to fast is best for you, if you only knew.**” (TMQ, 2:184).

Fasting is beneficial, so we should increase the days of our fasting. It was mentioned in the authentic hadith that the Prophet said, “if you fast you will become healthy.” The Messenger (SAWS) also said, “The son of Adam never filled a container that is worse than his abdomen.”⁹⁰

The Prophet (SAWS) taught us that what one takes in their stomach is the source of their illnesses. We, Muslims, should not be excessive in food and drink. Allah (SWT) said, “**...and eat and drink, but be not excessive...**,” (TMQ, 7:31). We should make one third of our stomach for food; one third for drink; and leave the last third for breathing. We should not eat unless we are hungry. If we are to eat then we should not be full. We should stop eating after reaching two thirds of our stomach.

Allah (SWT) praised the people who fast in the noble Qur'an in *surat* al-Ahzab in what can be translated as, “**Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the**

⁸⁹ Reported by al-Bukhary

⁹⁰ Reported by Ahmad

charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.” (TMQ, 33:35). This shows the greatness of fasting, and the strong connection between spending and fasting.

5- In some cases, fasting is a substitute to some actions, such as in *Hajj*. Pilgrims who are unable to buy *hadyy* (the animal to be slaughtered in *Hajj*) should fast three days during *Hajj* and seven days when they return home. Thus, they complete ten days of fasting. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And complete the *Hajj* and '*Umrah* for Allah. But if you are prevented, then [offer] what can be obtained with ease of sacrificial animals. And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial animal has reached its place of slaughter. And whoever among you is ill or has an ailment of the head [making shaving necessary must offer] a ransom of fasting [three days] or charity or sacrifice. And when you are secure, then whoever performs *Umrah* [during the *Hajj* months] followed by *Hajj* [offers] what can be obtained with ease of sacrificial animals. And whoever cannot find [or afford such an animal] - then a fast of three days during *Hajj* and of seven when you have returned [home]. Those are ten complete [days]. This is for those whose family is not in the area of al-Masjid al-Haram. And fear Allah and know that Allah is severe in penalty.” (TMQ, 2:196).**

The one who breaks his fast intentionally, during the day of Ramadan should fast, as expiation, two consecutive months (60 days) plus the day he broke his fast in. If he could not fast two consecutive months, then he should feed 60 needy people. Whoever feeds a fasting person would gain a reward similar to that person, without decreasing his reward of the fed one. Whoever kills a believer by mistake, he should fast two consecutive months to repent to Allah. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And never is it for a believer to kill a believer except by mistake. And whoever kills a believer by mistake - then the freeing of a believing slave and a compensation payment presented to the deceased's family [is required] unless they give [up their right as] charity. But if the deceased was from a people at war with you and he was a believer - then [only] the freeing of a believing slave; and if he was from a people with whom you have a treaty - then a compensation payment presented to his family and the freeing of a believing slave. And whoever does not find [one or cannot afford to buy one] - then [instead], a fast for two months consecutively, [seeking] acceptance of repentance from Allah. And Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.” (TMQ, 4:92).**

The man who made *thihaar* to his wife (to tell her you are unlawful to me [to live with her as husband and wife], just as my mother is) before he touches his wife again, he should fast two consecutive months, if he cannot then he should feed 60 poor persons.

Allah (SWT) says in *surat* al-Mujadalah, **“Certainly has Allah heard the speech of the one who argues with you, [O Muhammad], concerning her husband and directs her complaint to Allah. And Allah hears your dialogue; indeed, Allah is Hearing and Seeing. Those who pronounce *thihaar* among you [to separate] from their wives - they are not [consequently] their mothers. Their mothers are none but those who gave birth to them. And indeed, they are saying an objectionable statement and a falsehood. But indeed, Allah is Pardoning and Forgiving. And those who pronounce *thihar* from their wives and then [wish to] go back on what they said - then [there must be] the freeing of a slave before they touch one another. That is what you are admonished thereby; and Allah is Acquainted with what you do.”(TMQ, 58:1-3).**

It is prohibited for the *muhrim* to hunt intentionally. Therefore, whoever does so should expiate by fasting. Allah (SWT) says, **“O you who have believed, do not kill game while you are in the state of ihram. And whoever of you kills it intentionally - the penalty is an equivalent from sacrificial animals to what he killed, as judged by two just men among you as an offering [to Allah] delivered to the Ka'ba, or an expiation: the feeding of needy people or the equivalent of that in fasting, that he may taste the consequence of his deed. Allah has pardoned what is past; but whoever returns [to violation], then Allah will take retribution from him. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Owner of Retribution.”** (TMQ, 5:95).

As for the expiation for vows, whoever does not find ten poor persons to feed or to dress; or a slave to free then they should fast three days. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you intended of oaths. So its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your [own] families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] - then a fast of three days [is required]. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. But guard your oaths. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be grateful.”** (TMQ, 5:89). This type of fasting is called the fasting of expiation. It is obligatory as the fasting of Ramadan, and the vows fasting.

Conclusion

1- The crescent:

Abu-Hurairah (RA) narrated that the Messenger (SAWS) said, “Start fasting on seeing the crescent (of Ramadan), and give up fasting on seeing the crescent (of Shawwal), and if the sky is overcast (and you cannot see it), complete thirty days of Sha'ban.”⁹¹

It is enough that a Muslim, of a good reputation and it could be a woman, to testify that they saw the crescent. If the people of a certain country saw the crescent, so all Muslim countries should begin fasting as well. A Kuwaiti would fast according to the Egyptian's seeing to the crescent and vice versa. This is according to the above mentioned *hadith*. This is what the majority of scholars have agreed upon, among of them are Abu-Hanifa, Malik, and al-Layth Ibn-Sa'd. We wish that Muslims would know this so they would all abide by the same time of beginning the fasting and ending it. They would all celebrate the feast for breaking their fast on the same day, just as they do in *Eid al-Adha*.

NB. The Muslim should abide by the situation of the country he resides in, in both beginning and end of the fast. If a Saudi is in Egypt at the end of Sha'ban, he should fast with the Egyptians. When he returns to Saudi Arabia during Ramadan, he should abide by what Saudis do.

2- A woman does not fast during menstruation

- A woman should make up for the missed days of Ramadan after the end of Ramadan. The make up should precede any other type of voluntary fasting. Voluntary acts of worship are not accepted until the obligatory are fulfilled.
- Intention is a condition for fasting and it should be determined before dawn. If the woman is pure [of menstruation] at that time, so she can set her intention.

⁹¹ Agreed upon by al-Bukhary and Muslim

3- Hastening the breaking of fast and postponing the pre-dawn meal

The most beloved fasting people to Allah are those who hasten to break their fast. It is desirable that the fasting person would break his fast with some dates. If he does not find dates, then he could take sips of water. It is also desirable to take *suhoor* at a late hour. There is a blessing in *suhoor* that it should not be abandoned. Taking *suhoor* is what differentiates between the fast of Muslims and that of the People of the Book.

4- Some legislative points regarding fasting

- It is not allowed for a woman to fast while her husband is present except with his permission.
- If a Muslim woke up in the morning and was *junub* (sexually defiled; it occurs after having sexual intercourse, which prevents one from praying, fasting, etc), it does not affect his fasting. He only has to bathe so as to be able to pray.
- It is undesirable to exaggerate in washing the mouth or rinsing the nose, kissing the husband/wife, or thinking of sexual thoughts.
- Whoever breaks his fast intentionally by having sexual intercourse during the day of Ramadan, eating, or drinking, he should make up for those days and expiate. In any other cases, he should make up for the missed days only.
- A traveler is free to choose between fasting or not. Generally, fasting is better as long as it would not cause hardships to the traveller. Allah intends ease for us and not hardship.
- *i'tikaf* (Seclusion in the Mosque) is *Sunnah* in the last ten days of Ramadan. It means staying in the mosque, in which *jama'ah* (congregational) prayers are observed with the intention of worshipping Allah. The Prophet (SAWS) used to make *i'tikaf* in the last ten days of Ramadan until he met his Lord.
- The minimum amount of time for *i'tikaf*, for both men and women, is one second. Islam, consciousness, purity from *janabah* are conditions for *i'tikaf*. It is spoiled by going out of the mosque for no urgent reason, or because of a woman's menstruation.

The Messenger (SAWS) in the last ten days of Ramadan used to encourage his household to worship. He encouraged people to seek *lailatu al-Qadr*, which is in the last ten days of Ramadan, or in the odd nights (19th, 21st, 23rd, etc.). Its sign is that the sun rises in the morning white and without any rays. Whoever observes *lailatu al-Qadr* let him say, "O Allah, You Are pardoning and You love to pardon, so pardon me." It is called *lailatu al-Qadr* because of its great value [Qadr means value]. It was also said that in this night is made distinct every precise matter.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"Indeed, We sent it down during a blessed night. Indeed, We were to warn [mankind]. On that night is made distinct every precise matter - [Every] matter [proceeding] from Us. Indeed, We were to send [a messenger]. As mercy from your Lord. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing."** (TMQ, 44:3-6).

Salman al-Farisy narrated that the Messenger (SAWS) gave a speech on the last day of Sha'ban. He said, 'O people, you are about to receive a great and blessed month. A month when one night is better than a thousand months. Allah decreed fasting as an obligation in it, and *qiyam* of its nights as voluntary. Whoever comes closer to Allah, by making good deeds, it would equal performing an obligatory act of worship. Whoever performed an obligatory act in it, it would equal performing 70 obligatory acts in other than it. It is the month of patience. Paradise is the reward for patience. It is the month of sympathy. It is

a month, in which the provision of the believer increases. Whoever feeds a fasting person [to break his fast], that would be forgiveness for his sins, and saving his neck from hellfire. He would gain as much reward as that fasting person, whose reward would not be decreased whatsoever.' They said, 'O Messenger of Allah, not every one of us could find something to feed the fasting person [because of their poverty]. The Messenger (SAWS) said, 'this reward is due to anyone who would feed the fasting person with even a date, or give him a sip of water or milk. It is a month, whose beginning is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its end is saving from hellfire. Whoever relieves the burdens of his slave; Allah will forgive him and save him from hellfire. Four things you have to do abundantly during it, two of them would content your Lord, and the other two you cannot live without them. As for the two with which you would content your Lord is to testify that there is no god to be worshiped but Allah and asking for His forgiveness. As for the other two, which you cannot live without, they are to ask Allah to let you enter paradise, and seek refuge in Allah from entering hellfire. Whoever gives water to a fasting person [to break his fast] Allah will make him drink from the *hawd* a sip, after which he would never feel thirsty until he enters paradise.'"

Fourth: *Salah* (Prayer)

Meaning of Prayer:

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember.”** (TMQ, 11:114).

He also says, **“Establish prayer at the decline of the sun [from its meridian] until the darkness of the night and [also] the Qur'an of dawn. Indeed, the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed.”** (TMQ, 17:78).

- *Salah* singular is *salwah*. It is the spiritual bond between the faithful spirit and its Creator (*AWJ*). It is the way the spirit remembers Allah. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance.”** (TMQ, 20:14). It means to remember me.

Prayer is a light that illuminates the believer's soul and purifies it. At the time of prayer, the soul connects with the Utter and Sole Light; Allah the One and the Only One. Whoever wishes to talk to Allah, let them pray. Whoever wishes Allah to talk to him let him read the Qur'an.

The Messenger (*SAWS*) said, “Allah the Exalted had said, 'I have divided the prayer into two halves between Me and My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks. When the servant says '[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds.' Allah the Most High says, 'My servant has praised me,' When he (the servant) says, 'The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.' Allah the Most High says, 'My servant has lauded me,' And when he (the servant) says, 'Sovereign of the Day of Recompense,' He remarks, 'My servant has glorified me,' and sometimes He would say, 'My servant entrusted (his affairs) to me,' And when he (the worshipper) says, 'It is You we worship and You we ask for help,' He (Allah) says, 'This is between Me and My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks for,' Then, when he (the worshipper) says, 'Guide us to the straight path, the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.' He (Allah) says, 'This is for My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks for.’”⁹²

- Prayer is a need for the soul to live, as food is a need for the body to survive. Without prayer the heart would become sick, blind, lose the ability to reason, and then die. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“In their hearts is disease, so Allah has increased their disease; and for them is a painful punishment because they [habitually] used to lie.”** (TMQ, 2:10). He also says, **“So have they not traveled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.”** (TMQ, 17:46). He (*SWT*) also says, **“And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless.”** (TMQ, 7:179). He also says, **“Indeed in that is a reminder for whoever has a heart or who listens while he is present [in mind].”**(TMQ, 50:37).

⁹² Reported by Muslim

Obligation of prayer

- Prayer is a pillar of Islam. It is the foundation of the religion. Whoever establishes it, he has established religion, and whoever abandons it, he abandons religion. It is the first thing we will be held accountable for on the Day of Judgment. If our prayer is good then we will be safe. If it is not, so he would be a loser. According to the majority of scholars, whoever abandons prayers is an apostate. If he is married, his marriage would become void. It was narrated in the authentic *ahadith* like Ahmad, and compilers of *Sunnah*, on the authority of Buraydah that the Prophet (SAWS) said, “The pact between us and them is prayer. Whoever abandons it is a disbeliever.”⁹³ Allah (SWT) threatened the one who abandons prayers with a place in hellfire called *saqar*. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, '**[And asking them], “What put you into saqar? They will say, “We were not of those who prayed,”(TMQ, 74:42-43).**

Allah (SWT) threatened those who overlook or forget their prayers with a place in hellfire called the valley of *wayyl*. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “**So wayyl to those who pray. [But] who are heedless of their prayer.” (TMQ, 107:4-5).**

Some scholars consider the one who abandons prayers as a perverted transgressor, and not a disbeliever only with two conditions. One: If he abandons prayers out of ignorance. Two: That he stops abandoning it.

Reward of prayer

1- Sins are forgiven.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “When the time for a prescribed prayer comes, if any Muslim performs ablution well and offers his prayer with humility and bowing, it will be an expiation for his past sins, so long as he has not committed a major sin; and this applies for all times.”⁹⁴

On the authority of Oqbah Ibn-Abu-Amer (RA), he said, the Messenger (SAWS) said, “If a Muslim makes ablution to its best and then performs prayer, knowing what he is saying [in his prayer], he would finish his prayer [sinless] as the day his mother gave birth to him.”

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “Allah, the Exalted, has made five prayers obligatory. If anyone performs ablution for them well, offers them at their (right) time, and observes perfectly their bowing and submissiveness in them, it is the guarantee of Allah that He will pardon him. If anyone does not do so, there is no guarantee for him on the part of Allah; He may pardon him if He wills, and punish him if He wills.”⁹⁵

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “The five prayers, and from one Friday prayer to (the next) Friday prayer is an expiation (of the sins committed in between their intervals) if major sins are not committed.”⁹⁶

2- The angels supplication for the prayer

- On the authority of Abu-Hurairah (RA) he said, the Messenger (SAWS) said, “The reward of the prayer offered by a person in congregation is twenty five times greater

⁹³ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

⁹⁴ Reported by Muslim

⁹⁵ Reported by Muslim

⁹⁶ Reported by Muslim

than that of the prayer offered in one's house or in the market (alone). This is because if he performs ablution and does it perfectly and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of praying, then for every step he takes towards the mosque, he is upgraded one degree in reward and one sin is taken off (crossed out) from his accounts (of deeds). When he offers his prayer, the angels keep on asking Allah's Blessings and Allah's forgiveness for him as long as he is (staying) at his Musalla (place of prayer). They say, 'O Allah, bestow Your blessings upon him, be Merciful and kind to him.' Then, one is regarded in prayer as long as one is waiting for the prayer."⁹⁷

3- A proof of Islam and faith

The Messenger (SAWS) said, "If you saw someone who is used to go to mosques [to pray], then know that he is faithful, for Allah (SWT) said, **'The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day'**"⁹⁸

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"[O Muhammad], tell My servants who have believed to establish prayer and spend from what We have provided them, secretly and publicly, before a Day comes in which there will be no exchange, nor any friendships."**(TMQ, 14:31).

The first thing Allah (SWT) said to Mousa (AS), when he was on the mountain of at-Toor was, **"Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance."** (TMQ, 20:14).

- Allah (SWT) Has made the first manifestation of worshipping Him is establishing prayer for His remembrance (AWJ).
- The *ayat* that show that establishing prayer is an essential attribute to the pious are too many to be counted.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"Alif, Lam, Meem. This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah – Those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them, And who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith]. Those are upon [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful."** (TMQ, 2:1-5).

The order of Allah to pray is mentioned in various ways

- **Establishing prayer:** Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"And strive for Allah with the striving due to Him. He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty. [It is] the religion of your father, Abraham. Allah named you "Muslims" before [in former scriptures] and in this [revelation] that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witnesses over the people. So establish prayer and give zakah and hold fast to Allah . He is your protector; and excellent is the protector, and excellent is the helper."** (TMQ, 22:78).
- **Humility before Allah in prayers:** Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"Certainly will the believers have succeeded: They who are during their prayer humbly submissive."**(TMQ, 23:1-2).
- **Maintaining prayers:** Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"And they who carefully maintain their prayers."** (TMQ, 23:9).

⁹⁷ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

⁹⁸ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

- **Observance of prayer:** Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “**Indeed, mankind was created anxious: When evil touches him, impatient, And when good touches him, withholding [of it], Except the observers of prayer - Those who are constant in their prayer, and those within whose wealth is a known right. For the petitioner and the deprived - And those who believe in the Day of Recompense And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord - Indeed, the punishment of their Lord is not that from which one is safe - And those who guard their private parts Except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they are not to be blamed - But whoever seeks beyond that, then they are the transgressors - and those who are to their trusts and promises attentive. And those who are in their testimonies upright. And those who [carefully] maintain their prayer: They will be in gardens, honored.**” (TMQ, 70:19-35).

Allah (SWT) ordered Muslims with five orders regarding prayer:

- 1- **Establishing prayer:** it means to establish a bond with Allah that does not snap for as long one is alive. We are not exempt from prayer no matter what the reason is; even during battles or sickness. By each *rak'aa* we pray, we add a brick in the building of our relation with Allah (AWJ). The more we pray the higher this building becomes. Thus, faith increases. The Muslim becomes nearer to Allah and His paradise, and farther from His hellfire. He also becomes farther from desires; his soul elevates and become more purified. It shifts from the rank of the *nafs* (soul, self or human being) that enjoins evil to a reproaching *nafs*, and then reaches to the level of the secured *nafs*. It is never mentioned in the Qur'an a direct order 'Pray'. If prayer did not establish a bond between the servant and his Lord, so it is of no use. Satan strives to drive us away from prayer as much as he can. His sole aim is to snap that bond; tear us apart with what he whispers in our ears. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “**Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?**”(TMQ, 5:91).
- 2- **Maintaining prayer:** it means that we should never stop praying. Permanence of prayers is a must. If the Muslim is sick or traveling, then he is permitted to shorten prayers, pray while sitting, or lay down. Yet, Muslims are never exempt from prayer for whatever reason, even if they are on their deathbed. The Prophet (SAWS) as he was dying said, “Prayer, prayer; fear Allah about those whom your right hands possess.”⁹⁹

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “**And He has made me blessed wherever I am and has enjoined upon me prayer and zakah as long as I remain alive.**” (TMQ, 19:31).

The Messenger (SAWS) even when he was sick and right before his death, he used to go to pray in the mosque, leaning on two of the companions, so as not to be absent from congregational prayer. He used to order his household to pray, day and night as Allah (SWT) Has ordered in His noble Book. He says, “**And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for [those of] righteousness.**” (TMQ, 22:132). Being steadfast in prayer is a very important thing, so we would be of those who established prayer; established a connection with their Creator (AWJ). We should also order whom we provide for [of our household] to establish prayer and never give up calling them for prayer.

⁹⁹ Reported by Abu-Dawud

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“My Lord, make me an establisher of prayer, and [many] from my descendants. Our Lord, and accept my supplication.”** (TMQ, 14:40).

- Allah (*AWJ*) praised Ismail (*AS*) and made him pleasing to his Lord because he used to enjoin prayer and *zakah* on his people. Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And he used to enjoin on his people prayer and zakah and was to his Lord pleasing.”** (TMQ, 19:55).
- Ceasing prayer spoils the soul and eradicates faith. It is like severing the bond of the soul with its Creator, as the body is deprived from food and drink.
- Prayer is of the essentials of the Muslim's life, everything revolves around it.

- Maintaining prayer, also, means performing it in its due time; and not to abandon a prayer of the obligatory prayers. We should not neglect the dawn prayer for example so that we pray it after sunrise under the pretence that he was asleep at the time. He, though, was supposed to wake up then. The Prophet (*SAWS*) was asked about the best of deeds to be done, so he said, “I asked the Prophet “Which deed is the dearest to Allah?” He replied, “To offer the prayers at their early stated fixed times.” I asked, “What is the next (in goodness)?” He replied, “To be good and dutiful to your parents”. I again asked, “What is the next (in goodness)?” He replied, “To participate in *Jihad* in Allah's cause.” 'Abdullah added, “I asked only that much and if I had asked more, the Prophet would have told me more.”¹⁰⁰

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And when you have completed the prayer, remember Allah standing, sitting, or [lying] on your sides. But when you become secure, re-establish [regular] prayer. Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.”** (TMQ, 4:103).

4- Maintaining prayer also means: to excel performing ablution, observe its conditions of cleanliness of body, clothes, place; perfecting its *Sunnah*, and pillars. They would take the prayer of our noble Messenger (*SAWS*) as a role model. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient.”** (TMQ, 2:238).

It was said that the middle prayer is *Asr* (afternoon) prayer and others said it is the dawn prayer. In the latter, day angels and night angels follow one another and then they ascend the heaven with the books of our deeds to their Lord and say to Him, “We left them praying, and we went to them [again] and they were praying.” Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And this is a Book which We have sent down, blessed and confirming what was before it, that you may warn the Mother of Cities and those around it. Those who believe in the Hereafter believe in it, and they are maintaining their prayers.”** (TMQ, 6:92).

5- To show submissiveness to Allah while praying

It should be known that one does not gain a reward [on prayer] except for what he is conscious of from his prayer. Therefore, we should focus on what we say or listen to during prayer. We should feel our standing before Allah, who Is watching us. We should be looking at the spot on which we will put our heads. We should be calm so that our actions during prayer would be right; stand well, and lengthen the time of prostration. The servant is most close to his Lord when prostrating. We should supplicate as many times with the supplications of the Prophet (*SAWS*) during prayer. If Satan overcomes us and draws our attention away from prayer for a while, we should seek refuge in Allah from the cursed Satan and return to our submissiveness before Allah. It is desirable that we recite what we memorize of the Qur'an; lengthen our recitation, especially those who are newly memorizing

¹⁰⁰ Reported by al-Bukhary

the Qur'an. It helps establish what has been memorized, not to mention more focus during prayer.

- Showing submissiveness in prayer requires one to perform ablution to its best, and not to pray when he is in need for answering the call of nature. Rather, he should come to pray with a clear mind that is not occupied with anything. He should choose a place that is away from noise and people so he could concentrate on prayer. He is permitted to spray some perfume in the place of his prayer; choose a beautiful and comfortable prayer mat to pray on so he would keep his clothes clean. All these details help the Muslim to show submissiveness in his prayer. Nevertheless, it is enough to know that the eyes of the King of Kings are watching us. He Is listening to us. Therefore, we should show our Lord the best of ourselves. Maybe the prayer we are performing is the last for us in this world, so let us perfect it, so the last of our deeds would be a perfect one. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah]. Who are certain that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him.”** (TMQ, 2:45-46). Allah (*SWT*) describes the people who are certain of the Day of Judgment and that they will return to Allah as the submissive. Their belief is the reason of their submissiveness, hastening to prayer, and maintaining it. As for the Muslim who does not remember the Day of Judgment, he is not of the submissive. It is hard for him to pray or show submissiveness during prayer, for it would be so difficult for him. Allah describes this type with what can be translated as, **“Indeed, the hypocrites [think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily, showing [themselves to] the people and not remembering Allah except a little,”** (TMQ, 4:142). The belief in Allah and the Day of Judgment is the secret behind being submissive and hastening to prayer.

Note: whoever misses a prayer should make up for it. On the Day of Judgment, the servant will be asked about the number of prayers they prayed, the times they performed it, their submissiveness during it. If the Muslim failed to perform it on time, so let him pray it in any other time, and show submissiveness during it.

Attributes of the prayers

The attributes of the prayers is mentioned in one place in the Qur'an, in *surat* al-Ma'arij in what can be translated as, **“Indeed, mankind was created anxious: When evil touches him, impatient, And when good touches him, withholding [of it], Except the observers of prayer - Those who are constant in their prayer. And those within whose wealth is a known right. For the petitioner and the deprived - And those who believe in the Day of Recompense. And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord - Indeed, the punishment of their Lord is not that from which one is safe - And those who guard their private parts. Except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they are not to be blamed - But whoever seeks beyond that, then they are the transgressors - And those who are to their trusts and promises attentive. And those who are in their testimonies upright. And those who [carefully] maintain their prayer: They will be in gardens, honored.”** (TMQ, 70:19-35).

These *ayat* tell us the eight attributes of the prayers:

- 1- They do not panic over worldly life tribulations.
- 2- They do not deny the poor and the needy their rights in the wealth they have been granted by Allah (*SWT*).
- 3- They maintain prayers and never cease to pray.
- 4- They have strong belief in the Day of Judgment.

- 5- They fear from the punishment of Allah (*SWT*).
- 6- They keep their private parts. They do not have sexual relations but with their lawful spouses; they do not commit fornication.
- 7- They are attentive to their trusts and promises.
- 8- They are upright in their testimonies. They do not delay to give their testimony. They do it honestly and truthfully.

If you want to be among those who establish prayers then you have to possess these attributes. Not all prayers are true prayers. Some people who do not pray well, their prayers are not accepted. In their graves, their prayers will come and hit them on the face saying, “May Allah punish you for not performing me well.”

What distinguishes prayer from other pillars of Islam

- 1- Prayer is the first obligatory worship in Islam. It is the only worship Allah (*SWT*) called the Messenger (*SAWS*) to ascend the heaven on the night of al-Isra' wa al-Mi'raj. The obligation of prayer did not occur through Jibril (*AS*). Allah (*SWT*) willed it to be commanded at *Sidrat al-Montaha* (a tree over the seventh heaven near paradise) without an intermediary. The miracle of *al-Isra'*, in which the Messenger (*SAWS*) went from the sacred mosque in Makkah to the *al-Aqsa* Mosque, and *al-Mi'raj*, in which the Messenger (*SAWS*) ascended the heaven to *Sidrat al-Montaha* was to impose 50 prayers at first and then lessen them to be only five. The reward, however, of the five prayers are the same as the 50. This shows the need of the Muslim to 50 prayers a day. It would be on average a prayer each 29 minutes. Thus, it is the highest rate of all imposed worships to be performed. Allah (*SWT*) lessened the number of prayer to be performed out of His mercy, yet they are the same in effect and reward as the 50 prayers. It is worthy mentioning here that the rate of fasting and *zakah* is once per year. *Hajj* is performed once in a lifetime. As the body cannot live without oxygen, the believer's soul as well, cannot live without meeting its Creator five times a day.
- 2- Prayer is the first thing we will be held accountable for on the Day of Judgment. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**But those who hold fast to the Book and establish prayer - indeed, We will not allow to be lost the reward of the reformers.**” (TMQ, 7:170). Thus, Allah (*SWT*) states that holding fast to the Book and establishing prayers are the attributes of the reformers. One is not a reformer unless he is a good one, and he would not be a good one unless he prays.
- 3- Prayer is the first good deed one performs prior all other things. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**And We made them leaders guiding by Our command. And We inspired to them the doing of good deeds, establishment of prayer, and giving of *zakah*; and they were worshippers of Us.**” (TMQ, 21:73).
- 4- Prayer is the best time in which to recite the Qur'an. Allah (*SWT*) says, “**Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do.**” (TMQ, 29:45). He also says, “**Indeed, those who recite the Book of Allah and establish prayer and spend [in His cause] out of what We have provided them, secretly and publicly, [can] expect a profit that will never perish.**” (TMQ, 35:29).
- 5- Prayer is first manifestation of *dhikr*. Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**[Are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of *zakah*. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turn about.**” (TMQ, 24:37).

- 6- Women are ordered in the Qur'an to pray as well. Allah (SWT) says, **“And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance. And establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O people of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification.”** (TMQ, 33:33).
- 7- It is the first deed the repentant does. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, when you [wish to] privately consult the Messenger, present before your consultation a charity. That is better for you and purer. But if you find not [the means] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. Have you feared to present before your consultation charities? Then when you do not and Allah has forgiven you, then [at least] establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do.”** (TMQ, 58:12-13).
- 8- Prayer is one of the means that teaches us patience. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah].”** (TMQ, 2:45). He also says, **“O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.”** (TMQ, 2:153).
- 9- Prayer is the first deed to be performed after declaring *shahada*. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer and give zakah and do not fear except Allah , for it is expected that those will be of the [rightly] guided.”** (TMQ, 9:18). It is the most important pillar after declaring *shahada*. Therefore, prayer is considered the best of good deeds, ever, to be performed.

Prayer, *al-Isra' and al-Mi'raj*, and the straight path

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from *al-Masjid al-haram* to *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”** (TMQ, 17:1).

Whoever ponders the journey of the Prophet (SAWS) at the miracle of *al-Isra' and al-Mi'raj* would see that it resembles the road to Allah in its two phases: to the straight path and on the straight path. The Prophet (SAWS) was taken at night from the Sacred Mosque to the Aqsa Mosque, where he met with all the messengers and the prophets (SAWS). He led them in the prayer as their imam, for they all are Muslims. Allah (SWT) says, **“Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim [submitting to Allah]. And he was not of the polytheists.”** (TMQ, 3:67).

Ibrahim (AS) is the father of all prophets. Many *ayat* assured that all prophets were Muslims, like Yusuf (AS) (Joseph), Isa (AS), Musa (AS), Solaiman (AS) (Solomon), and Dawud (AS).

Regarding Prophet Yusuf (AS), Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“My Lord, You have given me [something] of sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and earth, You are my protector in this world and in the Hereafter. Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous.”** (TMQ, 12:101).

Regarding Prophet Ya'qub (AS) (Jacob), Allah (SWT) says, **“Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You. And show us our rites and accept our repentance. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.”** (TMQ, 2:128).

Regarding Prophet Isa (AS), Allah (SWT) says, **“And [remember] when I inspired to the disciples, “Believe in Me and in My messenger Jesus.” They said, “We have believed, so bear witness that indeed we are Muslims [in submission to Allah].” (TMQ, 5:111).**

Regarding Prophet Musa (AS), Allah (SWT) says, **“And We took the Children of Israel across the sea, and Pharaoh and his soldiers pursued them in tyranny and enmity until, when drowning overtook him, he said, “I believe that there is no deity except that in whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of the Muslims.” (TMQ, 10:90).** The underlined words are what Pharaoh, himself, said as he was drowning.

Allah (SWT) clearing that Islam is the only religion and there is no religion other than it since the very beginning of creation says what can be translated as, **“Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account.” (TMQ, 3:19).**

He also says, **“And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers.” (TMQ, 3:85).**

He also says, **“So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam; and whoever He wants to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe.” (TMQ, 6:125).**

He also says what can be translated as, **“And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Jacob, [saying], “O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.” (TMQ, 2:132).**

Thus, it becomes clear that the prayer imposed on us is in fact an order from the King to supplicate Him, asking Him for guidance until we meet with Him. It is as He did with His Prophet (SAWS) in *al-Isra' and al-Mi'raj*. Therefore, they said that prayer is the *mi'raj* (way to heaven) of the believer as an affirmation of their Islam. We also say *shahada* in prayer. This also assures the need of the soul to be closer to its Creator. It calls for Him in every *rak'aa*, saying, **“Guide us to the straight path.” (TMQ, 1-6).** Thus, it is guided and elevated. Its Creator would speak to it, as we have mentioned before, the resemblance of this situation to that of the Prophet (SAWS) at *al-Mi'raj* when his Lord (AWJ) spoke with him at *Sidrat al-Montaha*.

Types of prayer

1- Obligatory prayer are the prayer imposed on all Muslims, male and female, as long as they are adults, and sane. Parents [or guardians] should order their children to pray when they reach the age of seven, so that they would get used to performing it. The Messenger (SAWS) said, “Command your children to pray when they become seven years old, and beat them for it (prayer) when they become ten years old; and arrange their beds (to sleep) separated.”¹⁰¹

This type of prayer is either:

- *Fard ein* (individual duty), that is imposed on all Muslims; male or female like the daily five prayers.
- *Fard kefaya* (collective duty), that is if performed by some of the Muslims the others will not be accountable for it, like funeral prayer.

¹⁰¹ Reported by Abu-Dawud

2- Sunnah prayers are the prayers the Prophet (SAWS) used to perform.

Whoever performs it will be rewarded, and who does not will not be punished. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “If any Muslim servant (of Allah) prays for the sake of Allah twelve *rak'aa* (of *Sunnah*) every day, over and above the obligatory ones, Allah will build for him a house in paradise, or a house will be built for him in paradise.”¹⁰²

For men, it is more desirable to perform the obligatory prayers at the mosque. As for the *Sunnah* prayers, it is more desirable to be prayed at home. Regarding women, it is more desirable for them to pray at home, whether obligatory or *Sunnah*.

There are other prayers prayed at specific situations

- 1- Prayer of *Istikharah* (prayer for guidance). It is prayed when the Muslim is confused between two alternatives; he should make *istikharah* so that Allah would guide him to the best of them.
- 2- Prayer of *Hajah* (prayer for Need). This is when the believer needs a specific thing to be done.

These two types are two *rak'aa*, other than the obligatory prayers. One could pray them at any time, after any prayer. In them, one would supplicate:

- 1- Supplication of *Istikharah*: “The Prophet (SAWS) used to teach us the way of doing *Istikharah* in all matters as he taught us the *Surah* of the Quran. He said, “If anyone of you thinks of doing any deed he should offer two *rak'aa* other than the obligatory ones and say (after the prayer): '*Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi'ilmika, Wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, Wa as'alaka min fadlika al-'azim Fa-innaka taqdiru Wala aqdiru, Wa ta'lamu Wala a'lamu, Wa anta 'allamu l-ghuyub. Allahumma, in kunta ta'lam anna hadha-l-amra Khairun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'aqibati amri (or 'ajili amri wa'ajilihi) Faqdirhu wa yas-sirhu li thumma barik li Fihi, Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha-lamra shar-run li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'aqibati amri (or fi'ajili amri wa ajilihi) Fasrifhu 'anni was-rifni 'anhu. Waqdir li al-khaira haithu kana Thumma ardini bihi.'* (O Allah, I ask guidance from Your knowledge, and Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah, If You know that this deed is good for my religion and my subsistence and in my Hereafter (or said: If it is better for my present and later needs), then You ordain it for me and make it easy for me to get, and then bless me in it, and if You know that this deed is harmful to me in my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter (or said: If it is worse for my present and later needs), then keep it away from me and let me be away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me, and make me satisfied with it). The Prophet added that then the person should name (mention) his need.” A Muslim should perform this prayer leaving the whole matter of choosing to Allah. They should be neutral about it. The answer to their prayer would come in either of three ways:
 - a. A feeling of expansion (happiness, contentment) in their breast, or contraction (sadness or dreariness)
 - b. Either easiness or hardness will occur to one of the two things
 - c. He may see a vision that would guide him to the right choice.

Supplication of the prayer of Need: “None has to be worshipped but Allah the Ever-Forbearing, the Generous. Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the Great Throne, Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. I ask you (O Allah) everything that leads to your mercy, and your tremendous forgiveness, enrichment in all good and freedom from all sin. Do not leave a sin of mine (O Allah), except that you forgive it, nor any concern except that you create for

¹⁰² Reported by Muslim

it an opening, nor any need in which there is your good pleasure except that you fulfill it, O Most Merciful!”

In this supplication we notice that the Muslim does not mention his need like he does in the prayer of *istikharah*. This is because one may supplicate with something evil. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And man supplicates for evil as he supplicates for good, and man is ever hasty.” (TMQ, 17:11).**

Therefore, the supplication put it as a condition that Allah must be pleased with it. We should trust in Allah's wisdom, His choice for He is the most able to choose the best for us. Thus, the best supplication is, “O Allah, choose the best for me and make me content with it.”

3- *Salatul-Jama'a* (Congregational prayer): Congregational prayer is one of the *Sunnah* prayer. It is mentioned in the authentic *ahadith* that its reward is superior to a prayer performed individually by 27 degrees. The Muslim could pray *jama'a* with his brother or household. Prayer is considered *jama'a* if those praying are two or more. It is better to be performed at the mosque for men. According to the majority of jurists, it is a *Sunnah mo'kaddah* (Sunnah the Prophet (SAWS) used to do throughout his life) and *fard kefayah*. The more steps are taken to the mosque and the more worshipers gather in the prayer the more reward the Muslim gains. He should not rush while going to the mosques. Rather, he should go with calmness, for he is considered in prayer since the minute he left home. He is considered in a prayer for as long as he awaits for prayer.

4- Prayer of *Jum'a* (Friday prayer)

Friday is the best day, on which the sun rises. [On Friday] Adam was created, entered paradise, and on that day, he was expelled from paradise. The Hour will come on Friday. It is greater for Allah than the Eid of *fitr* and the Eid of *adhha*. In it, there is an hour in which whoever asks Allah anything He grants him what he asked for, unless it is, unlawful thing. It was mentioned that this hour is after the 'Asr prayer.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “The most virtuous of your days is *Jum'a*. On that day, Adam was created and on that day he died, (on that day) the horn will be blown and the people will be dumfounded. Increase your prayers upon me as your prayers upon me will be presented to me.” The people said, “O Messenger of Allah, how will our prayers be presented to you when you have passed away?” He said, “Allah has prohibited the earth from eating the bodies of the prophets.”¹⁰³

It is desirable for the Muslim to bathe before he goes out for the *Jum'a* prayer; wear perfume, and arrive early at the mosque.

- *Jum'a* prayer is *fard ein* on all Muslim males, who are free, able to go to the mosque. It is not *fard* on women, travelers, and the sick. These [exempt] categories pray *Jum'a* as *dhuhr* (noon) prayer, which is four *rak'aa*.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, when [the adhan] is called for the prayer on the day of *Jum'a* [Friday], then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you, if you only knew.” (TMQ, 62:9).**

¹⁰³ Reported by an-Nasa'ee

5- Funeral Prayer

It is *fard kefaya* on all Muslims. They pray it over all Muslims who die. It is permissible to pray it individually. It has no specific time. Its pillars are:

- 1- Intention
 - 2- Standing [during prayer] for those who are able
 - 3- Saying four *takbeerat* (saying *Allahu akbar*)
 - 4- Supplicating for the deceased
 - 5- Praying upon the Prophet (SAWS)
 - 6- As-Salam (saying *as-Salamu alaykom*)
 - 7- Reading al-Fatiha
- The funeral prayer is a secret prayer, whether it is prayed during the day or at night. It is permissible to repeat it over the deceased. It is also permissible to pray *al-Gha'ib* (the missed) prayer over one whose body is missed.

6- The night prayer

It is the prayer performed after *Isha'* until the call to dawn prayer. It is the prayer that the Prophet (SAWS) prayed as eight *rak'aa*. He used to lengthen his recitation and end his prayers with *witr* prayer, either one or three *rak'aa*. It is legitimate to make *Qunoot* (a supplication) in it before bowing down and after recitation. It could also be made after standing from bowing down in the *witr* prayer. We should be aware that it is undesirable to pray two *witr* prayers during the same night. The night prayer is called *Taraweeh* in Ramadan. It is a congregational prayer that could be prayed in mosques. It is different than night prayer in other than Ramadan.

The Messenger (SAWS) said, "O people, spread greetings (saying *as-Salamu alaykom*), feed the others (in need for food), pray at night when people are sleeping, then you will enter paradise peacefully." ¹⁰⁴

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"They arise from [their] beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend."** (TMQ, 32:16).

The night prayer is the best prayer of all after the obligatory prayers.

Physical and spiritual purification

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of *janabah*, then purify yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful."** (TMQ, 5:6).

The Messenger (SAWS) said, "The similitude of five prayers is like an overflowing river passing by the gate of one of you in which he washes five times daily." Al-Hasan said, "No filthiness can remain on him." ¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

¹⁰⁵ Reported by Muslim

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Just see, can anything of his filthiness remain (on the body of) any one of you if there were a river at his door in which he washed himself five times daily? They, said: Nothing of his filthiness would remain (on his body). He said, 'That is like the five prayers by which Allah obliterates sins.’”¹⁰⁶

He also said, “When a bondsman-a Muslim or a believer-washes his face (in course of ablution), every sin he contemplated with his eyes will be washed away from his face along with water, or with the last drop of water. When he washes his hands, every sin they wrought will be effaced from his hands with the water, or with the last drop of water. When he washes his feet, every sin towards which his feet have walked will be washed away with the water or with the last drop of water with the result that he comes out pure from all sins.”¹⁰⁷

According to the above mentioned *ayat* and *ahadith*, it becomes clear that there is a firm connection between the physical and spiritual purification of sins. Whoever cares of his body's cleanliness is also caring for his spiritual cleanliness. Therefore, Allah (SWT) says, **“And they ask you about menstruation. Say, “It is harm, so keep away from wives during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves, then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you. Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.” (TMQ, 2:222).**

He linked between repentance, which is the spiritual cleanliness of sins, and those who purify themselves, which is the physical cleanliness of material impurities.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “The prayer of a person who does not perform ablution is not valid, and the ablution of a person who does not mention the name of Allah (in the beginning) is not valid.”¹⁰⁸

The Prophet (SAWS) also said, “Cleanliness is half of faith”¹⁰⁹

Maybe Allah imposed purity on us, so that whoever wishes to meet Allah during prayer should purify his body and thus, his soul would be purified too of all sins. They approached Allah with a clean body and spirit, clean from sins, even. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Whoever performs ablution well then says 'I bear witness that there is no god to be worshiped but Allah, who Has no partners and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. O Allah, make me from the repentant, and the ones who love to purify themselves' then, the eight gates of paradise will open for him, to enter from whichever gate he wishes.”¹¹⁰

The Messenger (SAWS) said, “Shall I inform you (of) an act, by which Allah erases sins and raises degrees?” they said, “certainly, O messenger of Allah.” He said, “Perfecting the ablution under difficult circumstances, taking many steps to the mosque, and waiting for the (next) prayer after the (last) prayer has been performed. That is *ribat*.¹¹¹ Here the Prophet (SAWS) has likened the waiting for the coming prayer to *ribat*.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Reported by Muslim

¹⁰⁷ Reported by Muslim

¹⁰⁸ Reported by Abu-Dawud

¹⁰⁹ Reported by Muslim

¹¹⁰ Reported by at-Tirmidhy

¹¹¹ Ribat: literally, stands for the tying down of the horses in the face of the enemy to prevent anyone from fleeing.

¹¹² Reported by Muslim

Here shows the importance of perfecting ablution, for sins' forgiveness is related to it. As cleanliness is half of faith, so a believer is not considered as believer unless he is clean and pure in soul, body, clothe, and place. Allah proved His love for those who love cleanliness and purity. Whoever loves the spiritual purity, then they would love the physical purity. Whoever hates to have impurity on his body, would postpone repentance, or spend a night while his soul was defiled by a sin.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Do not stand [for prayer] within it - ever. A mosque founded on righteousness from the first day is more worthy for you to stand in. Within it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves.”** (TMQ, 9:108).

Allah (*SWT*) tells that as the water purifies the body, *sadaqa* also purifies the hearts. Allah (*SWT*) says, **“O you who have believed, when you [wish to] privately consult the Messenger, present before your consultation a charity. That is better for you and purer. But if you find not [the means] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”** (TMQ, 58:12).

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“[Remember] when He overwhelmed you with drowsiness [giving] security from Him and sent down upon you from the sky, rain by which to purify you and remove from you the evil [suggestions] of Satan and to make steadfast your hearts and plant firmly thereby your feet.”** (TMQ, 8:11).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, **“Take, [O, Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke [Allah 's blessings] upon them. Indeed, your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.”** (TMQ, 9:103).

Thus, whoever sins and wishes to approach Allah (*SWT*) through prayer should pay *sadaqa*, bathe to clean his heart and his book of deeds from sins, so then he would meet Allah (*SWT*) in a state of purity.

The noble Qur'an affirms the importance of the place of prayer's cleanliness of all impurities. It shows when Allah (*SWT*) ordered Prophet Ibrahim to build the House (the Ka'ba). He ordered him to clean the House physically from all impurities and spiritually from all sins, presence of idols or status. Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security. And take, [O believers], from the standing place of Abraham a place of prayer. And We charged Abraham and Ishmael, [saying], “Purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who are staying [there] for worship and those who bow and prostrate [in prayer].”** (TMQ, 2:125).

He also says, **“And [mention, O Muhammad], when We designated for Abraham the site of the House, [saying], “Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who stand [in prayer] and those who bow and prostrate.”** (TMQ, 22:26).

The Qur'an also affirms the importance of the purity of the believer's garment, so He says to His Messenger (*SAWS*) what can be translated as, **“And your clothing purify. And uncleanness avoid”** (TMQ, 74:4-5).

The cleanliness of the body is mentioned also in the Qur'an regarding women, when their menstruation ends. He says, **“And they ask you about menstruation. Say, “It is harm, so keep away from wives during menstruation. And do not approach them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves, then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you. Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.”** (TMQ, 2:222).

Men are prohibited from approaching their wives until they [their wives] purify themselves after their menstruation stops. He says, **“When they purify themselves.”** He did not say, “When they are pure.” It means that man must not approach his wife until blood stops. He should even wait until she bathes then he can approach her. We Muslims should be pure physically of sins, body from material impurities until we win Allah's love. This shows the strong relation between physical and spiritual purity. In the previous *ayah*, the Qur'an uses the word “*tatahhar*” for physical purity. In the next *ayah* it uses '*tahara*' to imply spiritual purity.

In the Qur'an it is mentioned that the people of Lut (AS) reproached Lut and his household for not being homosexual, **“But the answer of his people was not except that they said, “Expel the family of Lot from your city. Indeed, they are people who keep themselves pure.”** (TMQ, 27:56).

Allah (SWT) says, **“O you who have believed, do not enter the houses of the Prophet except when you are permitted for a meal, without awaiting its readiness. But when you are invited, then enter; and when you have eaten, disperse without seeking to remain for conversation. Indeed, that [behavior] was troubling the Prophet, and he is shy of [dismissing] you. But Allah is not shy of the truth. And when you ask [his wives] for something, ask them from behind a partition. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts. And it is not [conceivable or lawful] for you to harm the Messenger of Allah or to marry his wives after him, ever. Indeed, that would be in the sight of Allah an enormity.”** (TMQ, 33:53).

We can deduce from the Qur'an that purity is of two phases

The first phase is the end of impurity and the cease of committing sins. It is the phase of abandonment. Then follows the phase of physical purification, and adorning the soul with repentance. This is the phase of adornment. It is not enough for the Muslim to remove impurities from his garment, or body. Rather, they should make ablution or bathe. It is not enough for the sinner to stop sinning. Rather, he should repent and reform what he corrupted. If the sin was him being unjust to others, then he should return their rights back to them. He should follow a sin with a good deed, even if the sin was being unjust to himself. He should hasten to purify himself and repent. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous.”** (TMQ, 31:33).

Postponement of removing material impurities makes it harder to be removed later. Sins are the same; the more one procrastinates in repentance, the harder it becomes to repent.

Allah (SWT) says, **“The repentance accepted by Allah is only for those who do wrong in ignorance [or carelessness] and then repent soon after. It is those to whom Allah will turn in forgiveness, and Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.”** (TMQ, 4:17).

Conclusion

According to the aforementioned, prayer is the foundation of religion. It is the connection of the servant to his Lord. It is his way to the heavens. A Muslim throughout the daily 17 *rak'aa* asks Allah to guide him to the straight path, like He guided His Prophet (SAWS). He supplicates Him to ascend with his spirit the heavens as He did with His Prophet (SAWS) in the night of *Mi'raj*. We, Muslims, should maintain our prayer, be consistent in performing it, and show submissiveness while performing it, no matter what our condition is. We are never exempt from prayer except when our souls leave our bodies. Without prayer, the heart becomes sick, blinded, and then dies.

We should also take care of our ablution, physical cleanliness (cleanliness of impurities) and also the spiritual cleanliness (repenting of sins). One of the most important examples on this is the order of the Messenger (SAWS) to make ablution when we are in a state of anger. Anger comes from Satan, and he is made of fire. Water extinguishes fire. The Messenger (SAWS) also advised us that whoever wishes to go to sleep should make ablution first. Sleep is the minor death. Muslims should be in a state of cleanliness when they die [before they are buried]. It is as if the Muslim washes his body and repents of his sins before he meets his Lord.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die [He takes] during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death and releases the others for a specified term. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.”** (TMQ, 39:42).

This type of cleanliness is two phases; the first is to remove impurities (stop committing the sin). The second phase is the purification, in which one bathes, wears perfume. It also comes through sincere repentance, reforming the corruption caused by this sin.

If we kept our prayer, then we have taken a covenant with Allah that He would forgive our sins except the major sins. We resort to prayer in the times of tribulation to help us be patient; times of choosing to help us choose; and times of need to grant us our needs.

We ask Allah to make us of those who perform prayers, whose attribute He mentions in *surat al-Ma'arij*. May He not make us of those who abandon prayer, whom He threatened to throw in *Saqar*. May He not make us of the forgetful to their prayers, whom He threatened to throw in the valley of *Wayyl* in hellfire. Allah (SWT) is Hearing, near, and responsive.

Fifth: Shahada

A- Meaning of Shahada

Shahada is the sentence said by a believer to announce his faith and entrance into Islam. The shahada is said after making *ghusl* (ritual washing).

In shahada the Muslim announces, “I bare witness that no God is worthy of worship but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah”

- ✚ The first half of the shahada reveals one’s faith in Allah, and that is one half of his faith
- ✚ The other half reveals one’s faith in the Prophet of Allah who taught us about belief in angels, books, prophets, destiny and the day of judgment.
- ✚ Hence, the shahada is announcing one’s belief in those six pillars of faith.

B- Islam and Faith

Islam stands for religion in its entirety and so does faith. Whenever faith is mentioned, it refers to the entire religion as well. Still they were both mentioned in one verse such as, **“The Arabs (of the desert) have said. “We have believed.” Say, (This is addressed to the Prophet) “You have not believed, but (rather) say, ‘We have surrendered, (i.e., we have become Muslims) and belief has not as yet entered your hearts. And in case you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not withhold you anything of your deeds. Surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” (TMQ: 49, 14).** In this context, Islam means the actual physical acts of worship whereas faith refers to belief in one’s heart.

Declaring the shahada must be preceded by solid creed and faith. A believer announces that he is a Muslim when he utters the shahada. He announces that he adheres to Islam’s pillars and guidelines. Whereas, a hypocrite may in fact utter the shahada while he does not truly have true faith even if he fasts and prays.

Muslims who came into Islam by being born to Muslim parents must read and search the meanings and requirements of their faith, so that their belief is the result of true conviction of their hearts and not through blindly following one’s fathers and ancestors without proper understanding of the true meaning of Islam and faith. Due to the negligence of many Muslims of that aspect, we find hypocrisy rampant in our Muslim societies.

It does not matter that in your ID, it lists Islam as your religion. What matter is that you truly believe in this religion and consider it your creed and faith so that Allah (SWT) enlists you with true Muslims until the day you die.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And Ibrahîm (Abraham) enjoined his seeds (Or. sons) with this, and (also) Yaaqûb, (Jacob) (saying), “O my seeds! Surely Allah has elected for you the religion; so, definitely do not die except (while) you are Muslims.” (TMQ: 2, 132).**

A. Pillars of Faith

Omar Ibnul-Khattab (RA) said, “While we were sitting in the Prophet’s house, a man dressed in very white clothes and with very dark hair walked in, he did not look disheveled or in the least affected by traveling and none of us knew him. He sat by the Prophet (SAWS) with his knees touching the Prophet’s and his hands on the Prophet’s thighs. The man said, “Tell me about faith.” The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, books, prophets, destiny (good and bad) and the day of judgment.” [Narrated by Ahmad]

From this Hadith we know that the pillars of faith are six:

- ✚ Belief in Allah
- ✚ Belief in the angels
- ✚ Belief in the books and scriptures
- ✚ Belief in the prophets
- ✚ Belief in the day of judgment
- ✚ Belief in destiny

B. The meaning of faith

The linguistic meaning of faith is to ultimate belief in something. The brothers of Yusuf (AS) used that term when they returned to their father without him and said, “And you will not believe in what we say, even if we were truthful.”

The meaning of the word “faith” from a religious standpoint is ultimate belief in the unknown (unseen), for that is one of the first characteristics of the pious ones.

Allah (SWT) said in what can be translated as, “Alif, Lam, Mîm. (These are the names of three letters from the Arabic alphabet, probably indicating that this inimitable Revelation, the Qur’an, is made of this Arabic alphabet. Only Allah Knows their meaning here). That is the Book, there is no suspicion about it, a guidance to the pious. Who believe in the Unseen, and keep up the prayer, and expend of what We have provided them.”

Faith is always related to things which we can not see or hear for it is closely concerned with the soul. Hence, belief in the unseen which the Qur’an tells us about can be a way to measure one’s strength of faith. The more one believes in such things, the stronger their belief. And the opposite holds true as well.

One’s faith in those six pillars can increase until it reaches the benevolence level where one’s belief in the unknown is on the same level as their belief in the shahada. In this case, we find this person worshipping Allah (SWT) as if they can see Him, hence the unseen turns into reality.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “How did you wake up today Haritha?”

Haritha replied by saying, “I woke up truly believing.”

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “For every true fact there must be evidence, so what is yours?”

Haritha replied and said, “I lose interest in this world and am now able to see Allah’s throne clearly, I can see the people of paradise enjoying its blessings and I can see the people of the hellfire in its tortures.”

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “You are someone whose heart is filled with Allah’s light. Now that you know, stay on this path.”

A believer values his faith in his Lord over his faith in what he can see and hear. For everything that was mentioned in the Qur’an is the truth, and everything which contradicts the Qur’an is false. The increase of faith is by increasing the belief in the unknown mentioned in the Quran followed by increase in committing good deeds and following the laws of Allah as well as adhering to the sunnah of His Prophet (SAWS) leading to the straight path.

The proof of one’s belief in the unknown is through good deeds, this is why faith is the foundation for every good deed. Allah (SWT) says in many verses “*Those who believe and do good deeds*”. The more one’s faith increases, so should his good deeds. The opposite holds true.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, “So he smiled broadly, laughing at its speech, and said, **“Lord! Dispense me to thank (You) for Your favor wherewith You have favored me and (both) my parents, and to do righteousness that satisfies You, and cause me to enter by Your mercy, among Your righteous bondmen.”**(TMQ: 27, 19)

D- Meaning of True Faith

Faith and true believers were mentioned in the chapter of Al-Anfal in the Glorious Qur’an two times.

In the beginning of the chapter, Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“They ask you about the spoils. (The Arabic word *nafl* originally means: supererogatory prayer, or gift) Say, “The spoils (belong) to Allah and the Messenger; so be pious to Allah, and act righteously among yourselves (Or: make a reconciliation after differences) and obey Allah and His Messenger, in case you are believers. Surely the believers are only the ones who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts tremble and when His ayat (Signs or verses) are recited to them, they increase them in belief, and in their Lord they put their trust. The ones who keep up the prayer and expend of what We have provided them. Those are truly the ones who are believers; they have degrees in the Providence of their Lord, and forgiveness, and an honorable provision.”** (TMQ: 8, 1-4).

In another verse, Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“And the ones who have believed, and have emigrated, and have striven in the way of Allah, and the ones who have given abode and helped towards victory, those are they (who truly) are believers; they will have forgiveness and an honorable provision.”** (TMQ: 8, 74).

We can clearly cite the characteristics of believers in the first verses of this chapter. Those five characteristics are:

- 1- Praying
- 2- Spending from what they were blessed with (money, knowledge, time)

- 3- Their hearts tremble at the mention of Allah's name during calamities related to religion, yet their hearts calm down at the mention of Allah's name during calamities related to this world
- 4- The faith in the unseen increases every time they hear verses of the Qur'an recited to them
- 5- Rely on Allah (SWT) truly while striving themselves to achieve what they want

The Qur'an gave an example of those who believed, emigrated and strived for the sake of Allah, as well as those who strived and opened their homes to those who emigrated. Those are the true believers. We all should look up to them and take them as role models whom we should follow towards true belief followed by good deeds for the sake of Allah (SWT) according to the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet (SAWS).

We also need to understand what disbelief is as well. Disbelief was mentioned once in the Qur'an in a verse where Allah (SWT) says what can be translate as, **“Surely the ones who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and would make a distinction between Allah and His Messengers, and say, “We believe in some, and disbelieve in some (others), “and would take to themselves a way in-between, (Literally: a way between that; i.e. away between this and that). Those are they (who are) truly the disbelievers; and We have readied for the disbelievers a degrading torment.” (TMQ: 4, 150-151).**

The above verse warns the believers from falling into disbelief in the form of the following:

- 1- Disbelief in Allah and monotheism
- 2- Disbelieving the prophets of Allah, or believing in some and disbelieving others
- 3- Attacking the credibility of prophets and the message they delivered
- 4- Believing in some verses while not believing in others.

A person who falls victim to the above may want to accept what he wishes from Islam and leave what he/she does not wish to adhere to; To believe in the prophets and verses and disbelieve in others. The status of such people is that of the hypocrites in the lowest pits of the hellfire.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“(Yet) thereafter, you are these (who) kill yourselves (i.e. kill some of you) and drive out a group among you from their residences, backing each other against them in vice and hostility; and in case they come up to you captured, you ransom them, (while) driving them out is prohibited for you. Do you then believe in some (parts) of the Book and disbelieve in other parts? (Literally: in some parts) So in no way is the recompense of whoever of you performs that (anything) except disgrace in the present (Literally: the lowly (life), i.e., the life of this world) life, and on the Day of the Resurrection they are to be turned back to the strictest torment. And in no way is Allah ever heedless of whatever you do.” (TMQ: 2, 85).**

From here the meaning of faith is clarified; that which is embodied in one's good deeds. May Allah (SWT) grant us all to be among those who have true faith.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness, the Gardens of Paradise will (duly) be their hospitality;” (TMQ: 18, 107).**

E- Relationship between the pillars of faith

We can better understand the relative importance of the pillars of faith if we understand the objective behind sending prophets to mankind. For when Allah (SWT) spoke to Musa (AS), He (SWT) said what can be translated as, **“When he came to the fire, he was summoned, “O Mûsa! Surely I, Ever I, am your Lord. So take off your shoes, surely you are in the holy valley, Tuwa. And I, Ever I, have chosen you; so listen to whatever is revealed. Surely I, Ever I, am Allah; there is no god except I; so worship Me, and keep up the prayer for My Remembrance. Surely the Hour is coming up-I would almost conceal it-that every self may be recompensed for whatever it endeavors (to achieve). So definitely do not let him who does not believe in it and closely follows his (own) prejudices bar you from it (and) then you will topple down.” (TMQ: 20, 11-16).**

Those verses illustrated the basics of faith and Islamic creed, which are:

- 1- Belief in Allah alone with no partners, doing *dhikr*, worshipping, and obeying Him (SWT).
- 2- Belief in the day of judgment, understanding the concept of being held accountable for one’s actions and preparing for it.

The basis for faith is the belief in Allah (SWT) and it comprises 50 % of what faith is, as it is half of the *shahada*.

The Glorious Qur’an discusses three main topics, two of which are related to the unseen.

Those topics are:

- 1- Monotheism and ultimate belief in Allah.
- 2- Stories which discuss the other five pillars of faith.
- 3- The third type deals with all that we should be doing and the things which are prohibited. It also covers guidelines, principles and rulings.

Hence, although belief takes up two thirds of the path to Allah (SWT), good deeds which take up the last third are in fact relying on one’s belief. This explains why the Prophet (SAWS) spent thirteen years in Makkah imbedding creed and faith in people. When the Prophet (SAWS) migrated to Madinah, he did so in order to build the Muslim community and he stayed there for only ten years. Indeed, it is vital to construct the foundation in terms of the creed and basics of belief, while good deeds are the fruits of such foundation. This is why all the commands and prohibitions became known in Madinah, which indicates the importance of properly instilling the belief in one’s heart.

This is how believing in Allah is one third of the path to Him (SWT), while the second third combines the other pillars of faith (angels, books, prophets, destiny and the day of judgment), then the final third completes the path with the good deeds derived from true faith.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness, the Gardens of Paradise will (duly) be their hospitality;” (TMQ: 18, 107).**

Section One: Belief in Allah

Represent half of the faith and Islamic creed and is the basis of one's belief.

Section Two: Belief in the day of judgment

Is the epitome of belief as it represents the message which prophets were sent with to mankind. If there was no day of judgment where people are held accountable for their deeds, then there would have been no point in sending prophets to mankind as everyone would be the same whether they are believers, disbelievers, good or bad.

The verses which refer to both belief in Allah and the day of judgment as representing faith in its entirety are many. Allah (SWT) says in what can be translated as, **“And of mankind (there) are some who say, “We have believed in Allah and in the Last Day.” And in no way are they believers.” (TMQ: 2:8).**

This type of belief comes right after belief in Allah (SWT) in terms of significance.

Section Three: Belief in destiny

Belief in destiny is a great indicator of one's faith. People are often tested through this type of faith especially in times of great trials and dilemmas. Patience often mirrors one's faith. The stronger one's faith is, the more their patience is in facing their trial or calamity.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And indeed We will definitely try you with something of fear and hunger, and diminution of riches, and selves, and products; and give glad tidings to the patient, Who, when an affliction afflicts them, say, “Surely we belong to Allah, and surely to Him we are returning.” Upon those are the prayers from their Lord, and mercy; and those are they (who) are the right-guided.” (TMQ: 2, 155-157).**

Therefore, true faith comes to surface in such situations where calamities and trials increase one's faith and dedication.

Among Ibn 'Atau-llah as-Sakandary's wise sayings is,

Whoever was blessed with understanding during trials
To them trials are considered the best of blessings

Belief in destiny follows belief in the day of judgment in terms of significance.

Section four: Belief in angels, prophets and books

Believing in these three has the same objective of conveying the message to mankind. In order for this objective to be realized, belief is required in the prophets and the books and scriptures which they brought forth. Also significant, is the belief in the angels who carried these and revelations from Allah (SWT) to the prophets.

Those are related in their importance and delivery of the objective, and they also link belief in Allah (SWT) to the belief in the day of judgment. In other words, belief in angels, prophets and books links the basis of belief (in Allah) to the objective of belief (that of the day of judgment).

Belief in angels and jinn

Belief in Angels:

Angels are among Allah's creations which were created before Adam. They were created from light. Angels do not disobey Allah and do as they are told by Allah (SWT). The number of angels is indefinite and they are divided based on their various tasks.

There are many types of angels, and there is no way for us to count them. Angels cannot be seen, although the Prophet (SAWS) was able to see Jibril (AS) in his angelic form twice; once in the cave of Hira' and another time on the night of *al-israa* and *al-mi'raj*¹¹³ where he had 600 wings that blocked the horizon.

There are no male and female angels, for they are a different species than that of mankind. Angels ask forgiveness for the believers as they invoke Allah (SWT) in his infinite mercy and forgiveness to pardon and forgive those who have repented. Angels also ask for the peace and blessings of Allah (SWT) on Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). Their prayers consist of supplication and asking for forgiveness.

Allah (SWT) says in the Glorious Qur'an what can be translated as, **“Surely Allah and His Angels shower Serenity (Literally: shower prayers) on the Prophet. O you who have believed, pray for (benediction on) him, and submit in full submission.”** (TMQ: 33, 56).

On the day of judgment, the angels will die including the one who blew in the horn as well as the angel of death. No one stays alive. Allah (SWT) then asks “To who is the dominion today?” and no one answers. Then Allah (SWT) asks “Allah, The One, The Superb Vanquisher.” Then Allah (SWT) resurrects them all for the day of judgment.

Glorified by Allah, The Ever Living , The One who does not die.

Belief in jinn¹¹⁴:

Jinn are created from fire, there is good and bad jinn. Devils are the rebels of jinn, and their leader is *Iblis*.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And Ash-Shaytan (The all-vicious “one”, i.e., the Devil) says, as soon as the Command is decreed, “Surely Allah promised you a promise of Truth, and I promised you, then I failed you; and in no way did I have any all-binding authority over you except that I called you, so you responded to me. So do not blame me and blame yourselves. In no way can I be a screamer (i.e., able to every for help for you) for you, and in no way can you be screamers for me. Surely I disbelieved in your associating me (with Allah) earlier.” Surely the unjust will have a painful torment.”** (TMQ: 14, 22).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“And as We said to the Angels, “Prostrate (yourselves) to Adam.” So they prostrated themselves, except Iblis. He was one of the jinn, so he (was immoral and) rebelled against his Lord's Command. Do you then take him to yourselves and his offspring to be (your) patrons, apart from Me, and they are an enemy to you? Miserable is it (as) an exchange for the unjust (ones)!”** (TMQ: 18, 50).

¹¹³ The night journey of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) from Makkah to Jerusalem and his ascension to the seventh heaven.

¹¹⁴ An invisible being of fire.

Jinn can see human beings, whereas they can not see them. There is no way to contact them. The Prophet (SAWS) sent Ali (RA) to the jinn where he conveyed the message to worship Allah to them as well. Among them here are believers as well disbelievers. There are good and bad jinns just as is the case with human beings. However, jinn are a lower degree than mankind.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And indeed We have already honored the Seeds (Or: sons) of Adam and carried them on land and sea, (Literally: in the land the sea) and provided them of the good (things), and graced them over many of whom We created with marked graciousness.”** (TMQ: 17, 70).

The jinn can not harm human beings unless decreed by Allah (SWT), and this is not the case unless the person is weak in their faith and away from Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And they closely followed what the Ash-Shayātīn (the all-vicious (ones), i.e., the devils) recited over Sulayman's (Soloman's) kingdom. And in no way did Sulayman (Solomon) disbelieve but Ash-Shayātīn (The all-vicious (ones), i.e., the devils) disbelieved, teaching mankind sorcery, and that which was sent down upon the two Angels in Babil, (Babylon) Harūt and Marūt; and in no way did they teach anyone till they said, “Surely we are only a temptation, so, do not disbelieve.” Then from them (The two angels) they learned that by which they could cause separation between a person and his spouse. And in no way are they harming anyone except by the permission of Allah; and they learned what harmed them and did not profit them. And indeed they already knew that indeed whoever trades it, in no way should he have any apportioning (of Grace) in the Hereafter; and miserable indeed was (that) for which they bartered themselves, if they had known (the Truth).”** (TMQ: 2, 102).

If a Muslim is one who often mentions Allah in their prayer and supplication, then their jinn companion becomes weak and has no effect on them.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And in case an incitement from Ash-Shaytan (The ever-Vicious (one), i.e., the Devil) ever incites you, then seek refuge in Allah; surely He, Ever He, is The Ever-Hearing, The Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ: 41, 36).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“Say, “I take refuge with The Lord of mankind, The King of mankind, The God of mankind. From the evil of the constantly slinking whisperer, Who whispers in the breasts of mankind, Of the jinn (creatures) and mankind.”** (TMQ: 114, 1-6).

In another verse, Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“So when you read the Qur'an, then seek refuge in Allah from the outcast Shaytan (The all-vicious, i.e., the Devil).”** (TMQ: 16, 98).

Satan runs away from the mention of Allah, from prayer, from the adhan (call to prayer), supplication and reading the Qur'an. Those are indeed the best ways to protect oneself from Satan.

The incitation of Satan is different from that of the self. The self merely wants to satisfy a particular desire, whereas Satan aims for a person to commit a sin, regardless of its type or size, without any insistence on a particular sin for example.

To get rid of Satan, all we have to do is seek refuge in Allah (SWT). Whereas the self is indeed your worst enemy as it does not disappear at the mention of Allah, nor rise from a wayward self to a blaming and regretful self to a reassure and content self happy to meet with Allah, satisfied with whatever Allah bestows upon it.

The effect of Satan is indeed weak, for all it takes is for one to mention Allah and seek refuge in Allah from him and he will be burnt and disappear. Also, the stronger one's faith, the weaker the voice and effect of Satan becomes.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“(The ones) who have believed fight in the way of Allah, and (the ones) who have disbelieved fight in the way of the Taghût (An idol worshiped by the Arab pagans). So fight (the ones) patronized by Ash-Shaytan (The all-vicious, i.e., the Devil). Surely the plotting of Ash-Shaytan has (always) been weak.” (TMQ: 4, 76).**

All of what was mentioned above about the angels and jinn was derived from the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet (SAWS), hence it is vital that we understand and believe it.

Belief in the divine books and revelations

A Muslim must believe in all the divine books and revelations sent by Allah (SWT) to the prophets such as the bible to Issa (AS), the Torah to Musa (AS) and the scripture to Ibrahim (AS). Of course it is imperative to have complete faith in the Glorious Qur'an as it is the last divine revelation sent to mankind, the complete manual sent by the creator to us. It is also important to note that the Glorious Qur'an is the only preserved revelation. There has been no additions, deletions or changes in the Qur'an as was the case with the other revelations. This fact is historically proven.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely We, Ever We, have been sending down the Remembrance, and surely We are indeed Preservers of it.” (TMQ: 15, 9).**

At the same time, it is important to note that the Glorious Qur'an is the miracle of the Prophet (SAWS), and is the last divine book revealed to mankind for their guidance everywhere and at any time until the day of judgment. The miracles in the Qur'an are many, some are scientific while other are linguistic. Others come from the knowledge and prediction of many facts long before they actually occurred.

As Muslims, it is important to realize that all the divine revelations have been corrupted and changed over time by mankind as Allah (SWT) assigns the task of preserving it to humans (priests, believers, etc), hence those books are unfit to be followed and adhered to. However, we may very well read that which we know has not been altered as long as it does not contradict the Qur'an since it is our ultimate reference point.

So if you want this worldly life, then you must abide by the Qur'an. If you want the afterlife, you must also abide by the Qur'an. If you want both of them, the Qur'an must ultimately be your guide. The Qur'an is the divine revelation for mankind and must be adhered to and glorified as it was revealed by Allah (SWT) to the Prophet (SAWS) through Jibril (AS).

Belief in the prophets (peace be upon them)

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“The Messenger has believed in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and the believers (believe). Every one (of them) has believed in Allah, and His Angels and His Books, and His Messengers. We make no distinction between any of His Messengers. And they have said, “We have heard, and we have obeyed. Grant (us) Your All-Supreme forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the Destiny.” (TMQ: 2, 285).**

As true believers, we must all believe in all the prophets and messengers sent by Allah (SWT) to mankind beginning with Adam (AS). Twenty five messenger were mentioned in the Glorious Qur’an, five of whom have carried the larger messages and they are: Noah (AS), Ibrahim (AS), Musa (AS), Issa (AS) and Muhammad (SAWS).

Prophets and messengers are regular human beings who have been selected by Allah (SWT) over the rest of mankind.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely Allah has elected Adam and Nûh (Adam and Noah, respectively) and the house of Ibrahîm (Abraham) and the house of Imran over the worlds. An offspring of one another, (Literally: some of them from some “others) and Allah is Ever-Hearing, Ever-Knowing.” (TMQ: 3, 33-34).**

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“Say, “Surely I am only a mortal the like of you: it is revealed to me that surely your God is only One God. So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, then let him do righteous deed (s) and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord.” (TMQ: 18, 110).**

Issa (AS) the son of Maryam is a great Prophet whom Allah (SWT) created without a father, just as Allah (SWT) created Adam (AS) and Hawa without a father or mother. Issa (AS) did not die at the cross, but he was elevated by Allah (SWT) and will return to earth yet again to kill the anti-Christ and pray with Muslims their prayer and be buried next to the Prophet (SAWS) in Madinah.

Issa (AS) never claimed to be the son of Allah and whoever attributes a son to Allah then he is a disbeliever. The miracles of Issa (AS) are like those of the other prophets, provided and blessed by Allah (SWT) to let people know that he is indeed a Prophet from Allah, the God who has no son and was not begotten.

All of the prophets have the same universal message; that of monotheism. Although their books and revelations may differ, yet we must never differentiate between them for they were all selected and guided by Allah (SWT) to the straight path.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And in no way did We send (any) Messenger even before you except that We revealed to him, (saying), “There is no god except I; so worship Me.” (TMQ: 21, 25).**

Allah (SWT) said about Musa and Harun, peace be upon them both, what can be translated as, **“And We guided them both in the straight Path.” (TMQ: 37, 118).**

Allah (SWT) said about Muhammad, peace be upon him what can be translated as, **“That Allah may forgive you your guilty (deeds)-whatever of them has gone forward and whatever is postponed-and perfect His favor upon you, and guide you (The Prophet) on a straight Path.”** (TMQ: 48, 2).

Ibrahim (AS) was called “The Father of Prophets” and he is among the greatest of prophets for he was among the first believers and was not among those who disbelieved. Allah (SWT) chose and guided him to the straight path, and his descendents after that included Ismail (AS) the son of lady Hajar. From Ismail’s descendents came the Prophet (SAWS). From Ibrahim’s lineage also is Isaac (AS) the son of lady Sarah and Yacub (Jacob) (AS) and from his descendents are Yusuf (AS), Dawud (AS), Soliman (AS) and the rest of the people of Israel.

Allah (SWT) dedicated one third of the Glorious Qur’an to tell us about the stories of the messengers with their people in order for us to learn about their lives, trials and tribulations. As Muslims we must read and learn more about those great messenger who dedicated their lives to convey Allah’s glorious message to mankind.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed in their narratives is already a lesson to (the ones) endowed with intellects. In no way is it a discourse fabricated, but a (sincere) verification of what is before it, (Literally: between its two hands) and an expounding of everything, and a guidance, and a mercy to people who believe.”** (TMQ: 12, 111).

During the last part of *at-tashahud*¹¹⁵ in which we ask Allah (SWT) to bless the Prophet (SAWS) we also ask Allah (SWT) for peace and blessings for Ibrahim (AS) and his descendents (AS) including the other messengers who descended from him. Ibrahim (AS) is the one who built *al-Haram* mosque in Makkah, is the first Muslim and he has prayed for us all.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Our Lord, and send forth among them a Messenger, (one) of them, who (will) recite to them Your ayat (Signs verses) and teach them the Book, and (the) Wisdom, and cleanse them; surely You, Ever You, are The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise.”** (TMQ: 2, 129).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“In no way was Ibrahim a Jew, neither a Christian; (i.e. a follower of Isa “Jesus”, Nasraniyyan) but he was an unswervingly (upright) (i.e. veering away from idolatry) Muslim; and in no way was he one of the associators (Those who associate others with Allah).”** (TMQ: 3, 67).

It is important to note the relation between the requirement of prayer in *al-Aqsa* mosque where all the messengers (AS) have prayed behind the Prophet (SAWS) and being the first direction for the prayer of the Muslims. This fact proves that Muhammad (SAWS) was indeed the last Prophet, calling for the same message as all these prophets were.

Then the direction of prayer changed to *al-Haram* mosque in order to assure the uniqueness of Muhammad (SAWS) bearer of the message that completes all earlier messages. This was accomplished by the Glorious Qur’an which is the most authentic and complete of all divine books as it is the last. For indeed, the Qur’an will be preserved by Allah (SWT) until the day of judgment.

¹¹⁵ An invocation that is recited at the middle or end of the prayer while sitting.

We are encouraged to follow the Glorious Qur'an with its stories and lessons on the end result of those who went astray and chose not to follow the straight path. As Muslims, we learn and read our previous books and teachings, yet we must understand that Islam is the last religion and divine revelation.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“You have been the most charitable nation brought out to mankind: you command beneficence, and forbid malfeasance, and believe in Allah. And if the population of the Book (Or: Family of the Book; i.e., the Jews and Christians) believed, it would indeed have been charitable for them; (some) of them are the believers, and the majority of them are the immoral.”** (TMQ: 3, 110).

We ask Allah (*SWT*) to send His peace and blessings upon the Prophet (*SAWS*), his companions, descendents and the rest of the prophets and messengers. May Allah (*SWT*) reward them amply for their effort and strive to deliver their message of guidance to mankind. Indeed, the fact that the Prophet (*SAWS*) met and lead the prayer with all the prophets and messengers is the best evidence on their unity upon one message and one faith.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“So, as for the ones who have disbelieved, then I will torment them a strict torment in the present (life) (Literally: the lowly “life”, i.e., the truth) and the Hereafter; and in no way will they have any vindicators.”** (TMQ: 11, 56).

4- Belief in Allah

1- Belief in Allah the Almighty is the basis for faith

- Introduction

We have learnt that faith is the certain conviction first in the heart then followed by uttering the *shahada* and then the intention and good deeds. For faith is the cornerstone and the main source for all the remaining beliefs. Derived from the belief in Allah (SWT) is the belief in the angels, prophets, books of Allah, destiny and the day of judgment. Based on the strength of one's belief in Allah (SWT) is the pure conviction of one's heart followed by actual physical actions for the remaining pillars of faith. Hence, belief in Allah (SWT) is indeed half of faith, and the remaining pillars represent the other half.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “He is Allah, The Only One, Allah, The Everlasting Sovereign (The Arabic word is sometimes taken to mean all that is mentioned in verses 3 and 4). He has not begotten and has not been begotten, And to Him none could be co-equal.” (TMQ: 112, 1-4).**

The above chapter is considered to be equivalent to one third of the Qur'an based on the prophetic tradition. Upon reading it three times, it is as if one has read the entire Qur'an. The reason behind this is the fact that this chapter has in its verses the major meanings of belief in Allah, which is believing in the oneness of Allah, translated in *shahada*. Belief in Allah is indeed announced with uttering this simple yet grand sentence; I bare witness that there is no God but Allah.

It is important to think about the hadith where the Prophet (SAWS) said to his companions, “Renew your faith.” They asked, “How do we do so?” The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Say There is no God but Allah abundantly.” [Reported by Ahmad]

Belief in Allah is knowing Allah

It is vital to understand that in order to have true belief in Allah, we must learn about Allah through His words. We also must realize that Allah (SWT) has told us about Himself in the Glorious Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet (SAWS). When we learn about Allah (SWT), we will recite His names and attributes as well as all that we have learn about Him. By doing so, we will find ourselves increasingly getting in the habit of remembering Allah and doing dhikr. Next comes the confirmation of one's belief through obeying Allah in doing the good deeds which He ordered us to do and abstaining from the bad ones which He prohibited.

We must remember that mentioning Allah's names and attributes is in fact the profound translation of one's inner belief and conviction through their knowledge of those names and attributes of Allah (SWT). This is accomplished not only through reciting the names and attributes of Allah (SWT), but also through prayer, dhikr and supplication.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed you have already had a fair example, in the Messenger of Allah, for whoever hopes for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.” (TMQ: 33, 21).**

We also find other verses in the Qur'an where dhikr is mentioned in association with other forms of worship such as saying ۞Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah).

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance. And extol Him before sunrise and before sunset. He is (The One) Who (responds) to your prayers, and His Angels (respond) (By Allah's command) to bring you out of the darkness (es) into the light; and He has been Ever-Merciful to the believers.”** (TMQ: 33, 41-43).

In the previous verse, remembering Allah with much remembrance refers to the beautiful names of Allah (*SWT*).

Allah (*SWT*) also says what can be translated as, **“And to Allah (belong) the Fairest Names, so invoke Him by them, and leave behind the ones who blaspheme His Names; they will soon be recompensed (for) whatever they were doing.”** (TMQ: 7, 180).

And Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “Invoke Allah, or invoke The All-Merciful. Whichever you call upon, so to Him (belong) the Fairest Names.” And do not be (too) loud in your prayer nor hushed therein, and seek for a way between that.”** (TMQ: 17, 110).

Some have even contemplated that dhikr means saying Subhan Allah in addition to reciting the beautiful names of Allah (*SWT*) so that one says “Subhan Allah The Ever-Magnificent – Subhan Allah The Sovereign – Subhan Allah The Most Holy – Subhan Allah The Giver of Peace.”

Indeed the above is considered among the best ways to make dhikr. Linking some of the narrations which talk about mentioning and reciting Allah’s names and attributes to saying Subhan Allah or Alhamdu-lillah is a marvelous way to do dhikr and remind oneself of the attributes and magnificence of Allah (*SWT*).

- Alhamdu-lillah The Sovereign – Alhamdu-lillah The Most Holy
- There is no God but Allah The Ever-Living
- There is no God but Allah The One
- There is no God but Allah The Superb Upright Sustainer
- There is no assistance nor power except through Allah The Almighty
- There is no assistance nor power except through Allah the Ever Magnificent
- There is no assistance nor power except through Allah the Ever-Affluent

From all of the above, we deduct that the basis for mentioning Allah is through the remembrance of His beautiful names, and in its general meaning it includes other forms of dhikr, reading Qur’an and supplication. It is best to try to combine all of those forms in the beautiful names of Allah.

One of the aims of belief in Allah is to learn about Allah as He is our objective in everything we do. For He is the Ever-Living and everything other than Him is dead. And He is the Creator and the Sustainer and everything other than Him is a created object. He is The Truth and everything other than Him is not. Mankind no matter how long or short their time on earth is, are destined to die and they do not represent much in the creation’s history. In relation to the age of the universe, mankind’s lifetime is nothing but a few seconds. This is why Allah (*SWT*) says to the Prophet (*SAWS*), who is the best in mankind, “You are dead and so are they”. The Prophet (*SAWS*) was alive and breathing while reading this verse. So, what does “dead” here mean?? Is it death of the heart? For hearts have a lifetime just like bodies

do. A heart may get sick, blind and die. The spirit by which the heart lives is the Glorious Qur'an.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And We revealed to Mûsa, (saying), “Set forth with My bondmen by night. Surely you will be closely followed.””** (TMQ: 26, 52).

Allah (SWT) says of His Prophet (SAWS) what can be translated as, **“And is he who was deceased, then We gave him life and made for him a light to walk by among mankind, as one whose likeness is in the darkness (es), (and) he is not coming out of them? Thus whatever the disbelievers were doing was adorned (i.e., made attractive) for them.”** (TMQ: 6, 122).

The above means that the lifetime of the Prophet (SAWS) as well as the rest of mankind is too short to even represent anything in the earth's lifetime, hence it is much closer to death than life. The Ever-Living is Allah (SWT), for everything is destined to end except Allah. Everything in the universe will have an end, and there is nothing that can be compared to Allah (SWT).

Indeed, people sometimes do not really understand and appreciate Allah as they should. For He controls everything, and everything comes back to Him. His mercy and compassion encompassed everything. And He (SWT) is knowledgeable and aware of everything. He is the Ever-Preserving, The Supreme Nourisher.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And Allah created you and whatever you do?”** (TMQ: 37, 96).

This is an aspect of gaining knowledge and learning about Allah, which in itself is the basis for the obedience and worship of Allah. For how can we worship, love and remember Allah when we do not know Him? This is why it is vital to learn as much as we can about Allah (SWT) through the study of the Glorious Qur'an.

Knowing Allah is accomplished through learning the concepts of creation and command:

At the beginning of this book, we talked about guidance to the straight path and how one can deduct, using his mind, that this universe has one and only one God and Creator with no partner. With this conclusion, one accepts the messages of prophets sent to mankind, backed up by miracles from Allah, and reads the words of Allah to learn more about Him (SWT).

Allah (SWT) created two worlds:

- 1- Command World
- 2- Creation World
 - a. World of the Unknown
 - b. World of the Seen

A) Command World

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And they ask you about the Spirit. Say, “The Spirit is of the Command of my Lord; and in no way have you been brought of knowledge except a little.””** (TMQ: 17, 85).

The Glorious Qur'an is the word of Allah, related to Allah directly. It is not a creation of Allah (SWT).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And We revealed to Mûsa, (saying), “Set forth with My bondmen by night. Surely you will be closely followed.”.”** (TMQ: 26, 52).

With the Qur'an, hearts thrive and without it they die. Even if our bodies move and we continue to eat and drink. For blindness and death are the death and the blindness of the hearts. Hence, martyrs are alive in their graves and the same with the Prophets, who Allah (SWT) preserved their bodies and prohibited the earth to decompose them.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “The advantage of Allah’s words over the words of His creation is like the advantage of Allah over His creation.” [Reported by ad-Daramy]

B) Creation World

This is the world which contains everything which was created by Allah (SWT) which is not connected to Allah Himself. It is a world of what Allah (SWT) created, in it death, good and evil occur.

In the creation world is the world of the unknown. This world is that of anything that mankind can not sense, partially or absolutely. Partial-unknown is only unknown to some of mankind but not others, such as events which happened in a different time or place, as well as very small and distant objects which we can not sense or see. In this world is also what the messengers and prophets have told us about from the stories of the past, which we have not experienced.

Allah (SWT) says to Maryam (RA) (Mary) what can be translated as, **“That is of the tidings of the Unseen. We reveal it to you; and in no way were you close to them as they were casting quills (Literally: pens) (to determine) which of them should sponsor Maryam, (Mary) and in no way were you close to them as they took adverse stands (about that) (and).”** (TMQ: 3, 44).

This is the unknown which a person may hide in his heart, so that no one knows about it but Allah.

The absolute unknown is that which the senses of mankind in every time and place can not comprehend or sense. This unknown is among the creation of Allah (SWT), such as the jinn.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O Seeds (Or: sons) of Adam! Definitely do not let Ash-Shaytan (The All-vicious, i.e., the Devil) tempt you just as he brought your parents (Literally: your two feathers) out of the Garden, plucking out from them (both) their garments to show them their shameful parts. Surely he sees you, he and his (dependent) tribe, from where you do not see them. Surely We have made Ash-Shayafîn (The all-vicious ones, i.e., the devils) patrons of the ones who do not believe.”** (TMQ: 7, 27).

It is not possible for mankind to actually see shaytan and jinn, hence this is considered among the absolute unknown. Exceptions to this are miracles of Allah (SWT) such as allowing Soliman (AS) to see Jinn and make them comply to his commands.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “None knows the Unseen in the heavens and the earth except Allah.” And in no way are they aware whence they will be made to rise again.”** (TMQ: 27, 65)

Also, the Prophet’s (SAWS) ability to see Jibril (AS) on the night of *al-Mirraaj*, for all of those are special miracles to the prophets (AS).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“(He is) The Knower of the Unseen, so He does not disclose His Unseen to anyone, Excepting to such a Messenger as He is Divinely Satisfied with. Then surely He dispatches (Literally: between his two hands) before (Literally: inserts) him and behind him observers. That He may know they have already proclaimed the Messages of their Lord. And He has encompassed (all) that is closely (kept) with them, and He has enumerated everything in numbers.”** (TMQ: 72, 26-28).

Those are unknowns which Allah (SWT) have kept to Himself.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And in His Providence are the keys of the Unseen; none knows them except He. And He knows whatever is in the land and the sea. And in no way does a leaf fall down, except that He knows it, and not a grain in the darkness (es) of the earth, not a thing wet or dry, except that it is in an evident Book. And He is (The One) Who takes you up by night, and He knows whatever you indulge in by daytime; thereafter He makes you rise again therein that a stated term may be decreed; thereafter to Him will be your return; thereafter He will fully inform you of whatever you were doing.”** (TMQ: 6, 59-60).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“In no way indeed will Allah leave out the believers in whatever (state) you are till He discriminates the wicked from good, and in no way indeed will Allah (allow you) to view the Unseen; but Allah selects out of His Messengers whom He decides. So believe in Allah and His Messengers, and in case you believe and are pious, then there will be for you a magnificent reward.”** (TMQ: 3, 179).

The Prophet (SAWS) denied having knowledge of the unknown world. Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And I do not say to you, I have in my presence the treasuries of Allah; and I do not know the Unseen; and I do not say surely I am an angel. Nor do I say to the ones your eyes despise, (that) Allah will never bring them any charity. Allah knows best whatever is in their selves. Surely, (in case I do that) I am indeed of the unjust.”** (TMQ: 11, 31).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“They ask you concerning the Hour, when it will have its anchorage. (i.e., when it will take place) Say, “Surely the knowledge of it is only in the Providence of my Lord; none will manifest it at its (proper) time except He. It is heavy in the heavens and the earth. It will not come up to you except suddenly!” They ask you, as if you were thoroughly (acquainted) with it. Say, “Surely the knowledge of it is only in the Providence of Allah, but most of mankind do not know.” Say, “I do not possess (any) benefit or harm for myself, except what ever Allah decides; and if I had known the Unseen, I would indeed have got plenty of the most charitable things, and in no way would odious times have touched me. Decidedly I am nothing except a constant warner and a constant bearer of good tidings to a people who believe.”**”(TMQ: 7, 187-188).

Other examples of the unknown are; the time of the day of judgment, sustenance, what is in the womb and the time of rain. Also, among the unknown is the time and place of every person's death.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely Allah, Ever He, has in His Providence knowledge of the Hour; and He sends down succoring (rain); and He knows what is in the wombs; and in no way does any self realize what it will earn tomorrow, and in no way does any self realize in whichever land it will die. Surely Allah is Ever-Knowing, Ever-Cognizant.”** (TMQ: 31, 34).

It is important to note that Jinn do not have knowledge of the unknown world, and the evidence to this is the fact that they complied to what Soliman (AS) had ordered them to do for some time before realizing that he was dead but leaning on his cane. The Jinn continued to work while in fear of him although he was dead, they only knew of his death when the termites ate his cane and he fell to the ground. If they knew of this unknown, they would not have continued to work in awe of him and in ignorance of his death.

Allah (SWT) says in the chapter of Saba' what can be translated as, **“So, as soon as We decreed death for him, in no way did anything indicate to them his death except the beast of the earth eating his rod. Then, as soon as he collapsed, the jinn evidently (saw) that; if they had known the Unseen, in no way would they have lingered in the degrading torment.”** (TMQ: 34, 14).

Among created worlds is the world of the seen, which is everything that can be heard, felt and seen by mankind. This world is relatively very small, constricted by time and place of each person. So the world of the seen, which many people base their actions, thoughts and knowledge on is nothing but a drop in an ocean when compared to the world of the unknown.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“They said, All Extolment be to You! We have no knowledge except that which You have taught us. Surely, You, Ever You, are The Ever-Knowing, The Ever-Wise.”**(TMQ: 2, 32).

One of the very first steps of faith is understanding the unknown through the words of Allah. For no one knows the unknown but He (SWT).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And man invokes for evil, as is his invocation for charity, (i.e., welfare) and man has constantly been hasty.”** (TMQ: 17, 11).

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Prescribed for you is fighting, and you have a hatred for it; and it may be that you hate a thing, while (Literally: and) it is most charitable for you; and it may be that you love a thing while (Literally: and) it is evil for you; and Allah knows and you do not know.”** (TMQ: 2, 216).

2) Sections of Believing in Allah

Introduction:

We can understand from what preceded that believing in Allah can be discussed through three sections:

- 1- Proving Allah's existence
- 2- Proving Allah's attributes
- 3- Proving Allah's actions

Each section is tackled with verses from the Qur'an. May Allah (*AWJ*¹¹⁶) honor us with His knowledge and elevate our degrees to be near Him, and merit us with His remembrance through day and night, as Allah desires and with His satisfaction.

O Allah bestow upon us the honor of knowing You and being near to Your Bounty like You say in Your cherished book, **“And indeed We already created man, and We know whatever his self whispers within him, and We are nearer to him than the jugular vein.”** (TMQ, 50:16).

Praise be to You Allah. You come near to us and we go far, You remember us and we forget, You cherish us with Your Blessings and we abstain to thank You.

1- Proving Allah's Existence:

In this section, we get to know how the Qur'an spoke about the divine self but we first have to set down some rules for understanding Qur'an *ayahs*.

a- Allah is different from all what you imagined about Him:

Therefore, if the Qur'an speaks about Allah's hand, it is not like ours and your mind cannot understand its true nature. Your mind is itself a creation of Allah (*SWT*) so how would the creator of the mind submit to the mind. Therefore we have to understand that such things are beyond our perception. Our senses have limits in the ability to perceive and our mind has limits in its ability to imagine and understand that which is impossible to cross.

b- Perception of Allah's self is beyond any human's physical, psychological or mental ability:

When Prophet Musa (*AS*) (Moses) wanted to see Allah (*SWT*), Allah rejected his request and told him you will not see me, but look at that mountain. When Allah appeared to the mountain, it collapsed and Prophet Musa (*AS*) (Moses) was stunned, losing his consciousness and senses. His body could not take the shock of Allah's appearance upon the mountain, causing it to collapse. Here, we have to bring to the reader's attention the effect of Allah's words. He (*SWT*) says, **“If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, indeed you would have seen it submissive, sundered apart out of apprehension of Allah; and those similitudes We strike for mankind, that possibly they would meditate.”** (TMQ, 59:21).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, **“And as soon as Mûsa came to Our fixed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said, “Lord! Show me, that I may look at You!” Said He, “You will never see Me; but look at the mountain, so, in case it stays residing in its place, then you will eventually see Me.” Then as soon as his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, He made it pounded (into dust), and Mûsa collapsed stunned. So, as soon as he recovered, he said, All Extolment be to You! I repent to You, and I am the first of the believers.”** (TMQ, 07:143).

c- We have to consider both the literal and conceptual meanings and not to ignore or deny either of them:

It is essential to respect the pronounced literal meaning of every word of Allah's book and its meaning in Arabic language, the language of the Qur'an. At the same time, the mind has to

¹¹⁶ *Aza-Wa-Jal* [Glorified and Sublime be He].

work on understanding what was left for our perception and what was mentioned between the lines inexplicitly.

Allah (SWT) said, **“Surely the ones who swear allegiance to you, surely swear allegiance only to Allah; the Hand of Allah is above their hands. So, whoever breaches (his oath), then he breaches against himself; and whoever fulfils what he has covenanted with Allah, then He will soon bring him a magnificent reward.”** (TMQ, 48:10). According to the explanation of this *ayah*, some people said that Allah has a hand like ours, most Exalted be Allah over that. The interpreter here took the literal meaning without using his mind to understand. Another interpreter took only the conceptual meaning and said that the word hand in the *ayah* stands for ability. In other words, Allah has a higher ability above ours and the choice of the word hand is only symbolic or figurative. This is also wrong, as every word in the Allah’s book was mentioned for exactly what it is and cannot be replaced by any other word. The proper understanding is the proof that Allah has a hand, but not like ours and the proof that the meaning of the *ayah* is that Allah (AWJ) sustains the believers and grants them victory and puts His hand in theirs to support them and stand them against their enemy. This way the word would have brought together the literal and conceptual meanings without ignoring any of them.

The Prophet (SAWS) confirmed the importance of both the literal and conceptual meanings; therefore, we should not ignore any of them. This is obvious in what he said to his companions; he (SAWS) said, “No one prays *asr* (afternoon) prayer but by Bani-Quraidha.” Narrated by al-Bukhari

The companions were travelling and the sun started to dawn so the companions split into two teams. One team wanted to pray *asr* prayer during the trip and before sunset when it would become overdue. The other team insisted to postpone *asr* prayer until they had reached Bani-Quraidha even if after sunset. The first team used the conceptual meaning. They deduced that the Prophet’s *hadith*¹¹⁷ says that the convoy should hurry up and reach Bani-Quraidha before sunset and not to delay prayer because prayer is a timed prescription for the believers. The other team referred to the literal meaning. They wanted to apply the exact words of the Prophet (SAWS) in their literal meaning without deduction or interpretation. They insisted on praying *asr* prayer when they had reached Bani-Quraidha even if after sunset. They refused to make a deduction or interpretation to the *hadith* text. When they arrived, they told the Prophet (SAWS) about what they had both done. He agreed with both and did not blame any of the teams for what they had done. This is the biggest proof that literal meaning and conceptual meaning are both important and none of them should be ignored.

d- Allah (AWJ) is not limited to a place or direction:

A Muslim should understand that Allah (AWJ) cannot be seen, is not limited to a place, location or time. Allah is the creator of every time and place and wherever you turn to, you are looking at the Face of Allah (AWJ).

Allah (SWT) says, **“And Allah has the East and the West; so, wherever you turn around, (then) hence is the Face of Allah; surely Allah is Ever-Embracing, Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ, 02:115).

¹¹⁷ The Prophet’s actual sayings or actions as narrated by his companions

Allah does not have a location or direction. He is not in the direction of the sky or in the sky itself. He is not in the direction of the Ka'ba but the Ka'ba is the *qiblah*¹¹⁸ of prayer and the sky is the *qiblah* for *dua'a* (supplication). Allah (*AWJ*) is not limited anywhere and is not restricted with boundaries. His chair embraces the heavens and the earth, for Allah was before all the places and is everywhere.

Being close to Allah is related to degree and not to location and Allah (*AWJ*) is closer to every one of us than his umbilical cord. Even the soul itself is a whiff of His Majesty. Allah (*AWJ*) is not in Makkah or Madinah only, but is everywhere and in every direction.

As for the time, it is a creation of Allah (*AWJ*) that we only recognize because of how short our life is. Allah is Eternal, the First and nothing came before Him, and the last and nothing will come after Him. Allah has no beginning nor end, no death nor life, because our time criteria do not apply on Him. Allah does not have a past, present or future as all periods and times to Him are the same. Allah cannot be close or far, as Allah created all places. Allah (*AWJ*) infinitely exists at all times and places even if it is beyond human vision ability. What is better is to worship Allah as if you see Him because even though you do not see Him, He (*AWJ*) sees you.

Praises be to Him, who cannot be seen but sees everything, The Gentle, The All-Aware. Therefore, whoever worships Allah as if he sees Him, Allah grants him benefaction and surplus. Benefaction is paradise and surplus is seeing the face of Allah in paradise; the greatest blessing for all believers in paradise. Allah's greatest blessing to anyone is letting them look at His face.

It was narrated that lady Aisha (*RA*) said, "Whoever said that Muhammad has seen Allah, they have made a great lie about Allah."

When the Prophet (*SAWS*) was asked if he really saw Allah on the night of *al-mi'raj*¹¹⁹, he replied, "He is a Light; how could I see Him?"¹²⁰

Allah (*AWJ*) is light over light. Our worldly eyes cannot see Allah and Allah (*SWT*) has saved this as a reward for the believers in paradise.

Allah (*SWT*) says, "**To the ones who are fair-doers is the fairest reward and an increase; (i.e., a surplus) (and) neither gloom (Literally: grudging circumstances) nor humiliation will oppress their faces; those are the companions (i.e., inhabitants) of the Garden; they are therein eternally (abiding)**" (TMQ, 10:26).

e- The meaning of being near to Allah:

The Prophet (*SAWS*) was asked, "Is Allah near so we invoke him or is he far so we call him?" so Allah (*AWJ*) revealed the *ayah*, '**And when My bondmen ask you concerning Me, then, surely I am near; I answer the invocation of the invoker when he invokes Me; so let them respond (to) Me, and let them believe in Me, so that possibly they would respond right-mindedly.**' (TMQ, 02:186).

¹¹⁸ the direction faced in prayer towards Ka'ba

¹¹⁹ the ascension of Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*) to the seventh heaven

¹²⁰ Narrated by Muslim, The Book of Faith (*Kitab al-Iman*), chapter 79, number 0341

So Allah (AWJ) proved his nearness to every human He created, even the rejecter of faith. This can be proved by what Allah said, “Let them believe in me.” He hears the crawling of a black ant on a barren rock during a dark night in the lifeless desert, and he hears everyone’s *dua’a* (supplication) and answers them. Allah (AWJ) is nearer to each one of us than our own umbilical cord. A person is closest to his lord when he is prostrating to Allah.

Allah (SWT) said, **“Then had it been that, when (the self) (i.e., the self of the dying person) reaches the gullet (of the dying). And you at that while of time (sit) looking on, And We are nearer to him than you, but you do not behold” (TMQ, 56:83-85)**

Allah is near to us but we are far from Him. He hears our supplication but we do not hear His orders and forbiddances. It is the human being who gave Allah his back and got busy with worldly matters away from the creator of this world. **“No indeed, (but) you prefer the present life, (Literally: the lowly life, i.e., the life of this world). And the Hereafter is more charitable (i.e., better) and more enduring.” (TMQ, 87:16-17).** So what did the loser of Allah find and what did the finder of Allah lose?

Allah says in a *Hadith Qudsy*¹²¹, “If those who are led astray from My path (i.e. turn their backs on Me) knew how much I long for their penitence and yearn for their repentance, they would pine away with longings to seek Me. If these are My feelings towards those who are led astray from My path (i.e. turn their backs on Me), imagine, then, how great My love is for those who seek (and follow) My path!”

Allah (SWT) says, **“Not at all! Do not obey him, and prostrate yourself, and draw near (to Allah). [A prostration is to be performed here]” (TMQ, 96:19).**

If a person wants to get near to Allah, then he is already near because Allah is inside him and in his heart. If he wants to feel that nearness, he has to increase his prostration, self-humiliation supplication and resort to Allah. The distance gets less with the increase in truthfulness and that is why people get closer to Allah during hard times and crisis. During these times, faithfulness and devastation in front of Allah and all reasons become meaningless and there is no refuge for a man but to Allah. Therefore, Yunus (AS) (Jonah) was really close to Allah when he was inside the whale and when it got really difficult. That is why Allah (SWT) says, **“And Thun-Nûn, (Jonah) as he went away angered. So he surmised that We should never have mastery over him. Then he called out in the darkness (Literally: darkenesses) (saying), “There is no god except You. All Extolment be to You! Surely, I have been of the unjust.” So We responded to him and safely delivered him from suffering; and thus do We deliver the believers.” (TMQ, 21:87-88).**

Thus we find that Allah ends the *ayah* by saying, **“thus do We deliver the believers”** when they are faithful in their supplication and are only hopeful to Allah (SWT) alone.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Is not He (Most Charitable) Who answers the constrained person when he invokes Him, and lifts off odious (happenings) and makes you successors of the earth? Is there a god with Allah? Little is that of which you are mindful.” (TMQ, 27:62).**

During times of tribulation, one figures out the truth that there is no refuge from Allah but to Allah. Then he would start being faithful in his supplication and would start entrusting his soul to Allah and submitting to Him.

¹²¹ The words of Allah, repeated by Muhammad (SAWS) and recorded on the condition of an isnad (chain of verification by witness(es) who heard Prophet Muhammad say the hadith)

It is narrated that one of Dhul-Noon's companions was checking out on the city affairs when he heard a mother hitting her kid and screaming in his face. She then took him out of her house and closed the door and the kid kept crying and looking around hoping he would find anything familiar. When he would not find anything familiar but his mother's door he would run back to the only place he knows and knock with humiliation and devastation and call out, "Mother, please forgive me, for who will forgive me but you. I don't know anyone but you." So the mother started crying because of her son's words and her heart softened for him and opened the door. She took him between her arms and forgot all what he has done, and let him inside her house again, and closed the door. Then, Dhul -Noon's companion said, "Now I found my heart; there is no refuge from Allah but to Allah."

This man understood the truth of knowing Allah and submitting to Him and not anyone else. A human with Allah (*AWJ*) is just like this wrongdoing child with his mother (and Allah is the best example). Allah is more merciful with His slave than a mother is merciful with her newborn boy. If the human realizes that he has no lord but Allah and that there is no door to seek but His open door, then he would head to it with the devastation and humiliation of a slave admitting his fault. Thus, he will find Allah all Merciful and Forgiving.

Allah is always near to us and calls on us five times a day to pray, and every year for *hajj*. Then some of us block our ears so as not to hear Allah's call, but Allah still awaits us to return to Him.

Allah (*SWT*) says, "**And whoever earns an odious (deed) or does an injustice to himself (and) thereafter asks Allah His forgiveness, he will find Allah Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.**" (TMQ, 04:110).

It is said, that a man from Bani-Israel disobeyed Allah for 40 years until his hair turned grey. He then looked at the mirror and wondered if Allah would accept his repentance after all what he had sinned during all those years. So he heard someone calling, "You obeyed us so we loved you, and you disobeyed us so we gave you a chance, and if you repented and returned to us, we will accept you." So how unjust can a person be by depriving himself from feeling the undoubted fact that Allah (*AWJ*) is very close to every one of us. Therefore, we have to make a great deal of effort to deserve this closeness. We have to supplicate and remember Allah, and seek his refuge and guidance. We have to trust Him in all our matters, and He would suffice us in all what we want. Is He not sufficient for His slave?

- Allah's escort to Musa (*AS*) (Moses) and Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*) is an escort of closeness.
- When Musa (*AS*) (Moses) fled with Bani-Israel and followed the Pharaoh until they reached the sea, Allah (*SWT*) says, "**Then, as soon as the two gatherings sighted each other, the companions of Mûsa (Moses) said, "Surely we are indeed overtaken!" He said, "Not at all. Surely my Lord is with me; He will soon guide me."**" (TMQ, 26:61-62)
- When Allah sent Musa (*AS*) (Moses) and Harun (*AS*) (Aaron) to the Pharaoh, Allah (*SWT*) says, "**Said He, "Do not fear (him). Surely I (Myself) will be with you (both); I hear and I see."** (TMQ, 20:46). Allah (*SWT*) also says, "**Said He, "Not at all, so go (both of you) with Our signs; surely We will be with you, listening."** (TMQ, 26:15)

- When the Prophet (SAWS) was in the cave of mount Hira' Allah (SWT) says, **“In case ever you do not vindicate him, (The Prophet) yet Allah readily vindicated him, as the ones who disbelieved drove him out the second of two, as the two were in the cavern, as he said to his companion, “Grieve not; surely Allah is with us. “Then Allah sent down His serenity on him and aided him with hosts you did not see; and He made the word of the ones who disbelieved the basest; and the Word of Allah is that (which) is The Uppermost; and Allah is Ever-Mighty, Ever-Wise..” (TMQ, 9:40).**

Allah (SWT) says, **“He is The One Who created the heavens and the earth in six days; thereafter He leveled Himself upon the Throne (How He did this is beyond human understanding). He knows whatever penetrates into the earth and whatever goes out of it, and whatever comes down from the heaven and whatever ascends (with difficulty) in it, and He is with you wherever you are; and Allah is Ever-Beholding whatever you do.” (TMQ, 57:04).**

Allah (SWT) also says, **“Have you not seen that Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth? In no way can there be a private conference among three (persons), except that He is the fourth of them, nor five (persons), except that He is the sixth of them, nor lesser than that, nor more except that He is with them, wherever they may be; thereafter He will fully inform them of whatever they have done, on the Day of the Resurrection. Surely Allah is Ever-Knowing of everything.” (TMQ, 58:07).**

A Muslim should seek any means of getting close to Allah like:

- 1- Asking forgiveness and repenting from sins.
- 2- Supplicating to Allah and getting humble in front of Him.
- 3- At times of difficulty and need.
- 4- At Allah’s favorite places like the Sanctified Mosque in Makkah, the Prophet’s mosque, the Aqsa mosque, and all the other mosques on Earth.
- 5- Put more effort into worship at the preferred times like the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah, the last ten days of Ramadan, *lailatul-Qadr* (the Night of Decree), on Fridays, and during the last third of the night.
- 6- Reading Qur’an as it is a way of talking to Allah during prayer and at all other times. Also Allah talked to Prophet Musa (AS) and that is how he got close to Allah. Therefore reading Qur’an and praying are the only ways for a person to commune with Allah and seeking his proximity.
2. Allah (SWT) says, **“And We called out to him from the right side of At-Tûr (The Mount) and We brought him near in private conference. “ (TMQ, 19:52).**
3. Whoever wants to speak to Allah, he should pray and whoever wants Allah to speak to him, he should read Qur’an.
- 7- Prostrating more frequently because the closest a person might be to Him is during prostration.
4. Allah (SWT) says, **“Not at all! Do not obey him, prostrate yourself, and draw near (to Allah). [A prostration is to be performed here]” (TMQ, 96:19).**
- 8- Working on obeying Allah and getting away from what He prohibited.

f- Believing in similar *ayahs* without going into details:

Allah (SWT) says, **“He is The (One) Who has sent down upon you the Book, whereof are clear signs (i.e. ayah = verses) that are the Essence (Literally: the Mother) of the Book, and others cosimilar (Or: ambiguous). So, as for (the ones) in whose hearts is swerving,**

they ever follow whatever (parts) of it are cosimilar, (inequitably) seeking temptation (to sedition), and (inequitably) seeking its interpretation; and in no way does anyone know its interpretation except Allah. And the ones firmly established in knowledge say, “We have believed in it; all is from the Providence of our Lord.” And in no way does anyone constantly remember except the ones endowed with intellects.” (TMQ, 03:07).

We should believe in similar *ayahs* just the way they are. When Imam Malek was asked about Allah’s words, **“Thereafter He leveled Himself upon the Throne” (TMQ, 07:54)**, he said, “the **leveling** is known and the means is unknown and questioning about it is a Heresy and believing in it is an obligation.” All the *ayahs* related to Allah’s self are similar *ayahs* that should be believed in as they are. Arguing about these *ayahs* is prohibited.

After we have dealt with the past five rules of understanding special *ayahs* about Allah’s self, we will talk about an example from the Qur’an. We chose to talk about Allah’s hand in the Qur’an for the reader to similarly handle all the other *ayahs* talking about Allah’s self.

By observing what Allah (*AWJ*) said in his *ayahs*, we will find that Allah said about His hand what follows:

1- Allah proved He had a hand by saying, “Surely the ones who swear allegiance to you, surely swear allegiance only to Allah; the Hand of Allah is above their hands. So, whoever breaches (his oath), then he breaches against himself; and whoever fulfils what he has covenanted with Allah, then He will soon bring him a magnificent reward.” (TMQ, 48:10).

2- Allah proved that the grace, welfare, dominion and sovereignty is in His hand (*JWA*) Allah (*SWT*) says, “Lest that the Population of the Book (Or: The Family of the Book, i.e., the Jews and Christians) should know that they are able to estimate anything of the Grace of Allah, and that the Grace is in the Hand of Allah; He brings it to whomever He decides; and Allah is The Owner of the magnificent Grace.” (TMQ, 57:29).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, “Say, “O Allah, (The Arabic word has the supplication suffix *umma*) Possessor of the Kingship, You bring the kingship to whomever You decide, and You draw (Literally: pluck out) the kingship from whomever You decide, and You render mighty whomever You decide, and You humiliate whomever You decide. In Your Hand is (the) Charity; (i.e., the choicest) surely You are Ever-Determiner over everything.” (TMQ, 03:26).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, “Say, “In whose hand is the dominion of everything, and He gives neighborly (protection), and He is not given neighborly (protection by anyone), in case you know?”“ (TMQ, 23:88).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, “Supremely Blessed is He in Whose Hand is the Kingdom, and He is Ever-Determiner over everything.” (TMQ, 67:01).

3- Allah proved that He created Prophet Adam (*AS*) with His hands

Allah (*SWT*) said, “Said He, “O Iblis, what prevented you to prostrate yourself to what I created with My Hands? Have you waxed proud, or are you of the exalted?”“ (TMQ, 38:75).

4- Allah proved that He has hands and that He used them to create cattle.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And have they not seen that We created for them, of what Our Hands did, cattle (Anaam includes cattle, camels, sheep and goats) so that they are their possessors.”** (TMQ, 36:71).

We should then stop our discussion at this point and believe what Allah revealed just the way He willed. We say, “We have believed in it; all is from the Providence of our Lord.” And “in no way does anyone know its interpretation except Allah” and **“and bestow upon us mercy from very close to You. You, Ever You, are The One Who is The Superb Bestower”** (TMQ, 03:7-8).

Now we move on to discuss an important matter related to Allah’s self, and that is the soul. This was mentioned with different meanings, which are:

- 1- The human soul that Allah blew into Adam’s (AS) descendants.
- 2- The soul, and that is the Qur’an.

Getting to know the soul is essential for every human being in order to get close to Allah (AWJ) within the boundaries that He has set in the Qur’an, no more.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And they ask you about the Spirit. Say, “The Spirit is of the Command of my Lord; and in no way have you been brought of knowledge except a little.”“** (TMQ, 17:85).

1- The Human Soul and the Self:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And indeed We already created man of dry clay of mud modeled. And the jinn race We created earlier of the fire (The Arabic word samûm is sometimes understood to be pestilential wind) of a pestilential (fire). And as your Lord said to the Angels, “Surely I am creating a mortal of dry clay of mud modeled. So, when I have molded him and breathed into him of My Spirit, fall down to him prostrating!”“** (TMQ, 15:26-29).

This spirit is the suave nature of a human. It resides in the dry clay body when the baby is still in its mother’s womb. Signs of life start appearing on this body. Then it moves from the stage of childhood, to youth, and then back to childhood but in a new form called old age, and then it dies. During the presence of the spirit in the body, the mix and connection of this spirit with the body becomes the self. The self is three kinds.

- The self commanding to bad deeds:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And in no way do I acquit myself. Surely the self indeed constantly commands to odious (deeds), except that on which my Lord had mercy. Surely my Lord is Ever-forgiving, Ever-Merciful.”“** (TMQ, 12:53).

This is the true nature of human selves that are not corrected, so they continue to command to bad deeds to follow one’s lust and this is the lowest kind of self and the farthest from Allah.

- The constantly self-blaming self:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And no! I swear by the self, constantly self-blaming.”** (TMQ, 75:02). This is a self that keeps correcting itself by mentioning Allah and so it gets purified and thus promoted from a self that is commanding to bad deeds to a self that is constantly blaming its owner. Allah has sworn by that blaming self for its greatness. It is a self that has mixed a good deed with a bad deed so that Allah might forgive.

- The composed self:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And none will bind (as) His binding. O you self (that is) composed, Return to your Lord satisfied with Supreme Satisfaction! So enter among My bondmen! And enter My Garden!”** (TMQ, 89:26-30).

This is the highest degree of human self, and the closest to Allah (AWJ). It is composed with Allah and so Allah is composed with it. It believes in meeting Allah and is serene with what Allah has destined and content with Allah’s bestows and so is rewarded by entering *al-jannah* (Paradise). The best example for this composed self is the Prophet’s self (SAWS). The Qur’an spoke about the self and not the soul because it spoke about the period that the soul is in the body during the lifetime and then during judgment when the soul returns to the body after Resurrection and the swarm (of the Day of Judgment). At death, the soul comes out of the dry-clay body and the self dies and thus the worldly life ends and the Isthmus-life starts when the dry-clay body returns to the earth except for the Prophets’ bodies and souls. The rest of the souls are either elevated or in *Sijjeen*¹²² until Resurrection.

- The self in this life:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And bring the women their dowries as an endowment, so in case they are good to you concerning any portion of it, (Literally: in case they feel good in themselves to you about anything of it) then eat it up rejoicing with wholesome appetite (i.e., take it and make use of it to your profit and advantage).”** (TMQ, 04:01).

The first self was Prophet Adam’s (AS) self from which Hawaa’ (Eve) was created. Then all the other selves reproduced.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Say, “Come (so that) I may recite what your Lord has prohibited you: that you do not associate anything with Him, and to show fairest (companionship) to (your) parents; and do not kill your children (out) of want. We provide for you and for them too. And do not draw near obscenities (i.e., irregular sexual intercourse; shameful) whatever (of these) is outward and whatever inward; and do not kill the self that Allah has prohibited, except with the truth (i.e., by right, in the course of justice). That He has enjoined you with, that possibly you would consider.”** (TMQ, 06:151).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“O you who have believed, be pious to Allah, and let (every) self look to what it has forwarded for the morrow, and be pious to Allah. Surely Allah is Ever-Cognizant of whatever you do.”** (TMQ, 59:18).

¹²² A place in Hell

- The self at death:

Allah (SWT) says, **“Every self will be tasting of death. And We try you with evil and charity (or: good) for a temptation, and to Us you will be returned.”** (TMQ, 21:35) Allah (SWT) also says, **“Surely Allah, Ever He, has in His Providence knowledge of the Hour; and He sends down succoring (rain); and He knows what is in the wombs; and in no way does any self realize what it will earn tomorrow, and in no way does any self realize in whichever land it will die. Surely Allah is Ever-Knowing, Ever-Cognizant.”** (TMQ, 31:34).

- The self at judgment:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And We will lay down the equitable scales for the Day of the Resurrection, so that not one self will be done an injustice in anything, and even in case it be the weight of one grain of mustard-seed, We will come up with it. And Sufficient are We for reckoners.”** (TMQ, 21:47).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“And every self will come, (and) with it a driver and a constantly present witness.”** (TMQ, 50:21).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“And when the tombs will be scattered away. A self will know whatever it has forwarded and deferred.”** (TMQ, 82:04-05).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“And when the Garden will be drawn within reach. (Then) a self will know whatever it has presented.”** (TMQ, 81:13-14).

Hence the importance of contemplating and thinking with one’s self that Allah has created with the ability to be good or bad. Every person then can lead himself to the righteous path of Allah and not to leave that self for its lusts.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And (by) the self and That (i.e., The Command) which molded it, So He inspired it to its impiety and piety!”** (TMQ, 91:07-08).

Allah (SWT) says, **“And as for him who feared the station of his Lord (i.e., punishment from his lord) and forbade the self (its) prejudices, Then surely the Garden will be the (only) abode.”** (TMQ, 79:40-41).

Therefore, it is necessary that the human would communicate with his self which is his mortal enemy. Reaching one’s self and having control over it and correcting it is reaching Allah.

Therefore, Allah (SWT) says, **“And in your selves; do you then not behold?”** (TMQ, 51:21).

So if the human forgets his self and ignores it and does not watch out for it, this is a proof that he has forgotten his lord. The same way, whoever remembers his lord would have remembered his self. When the human remembers and knows his self, he would know his lord and watch him through that self that needs all the care, correction, and purification.

Allah (SWT) says, **“He has already prospered who has cleansed it. And he has already been disappointed who stunts it.”** (TMQ, 91:09-10).

The cleansing meant is through reading Qur’an and mentioning Allah in all the different ways like reading His Most Beautiful Names, praising, gratifying, acclaiming, and glorifying Allah and asking for His peace and blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (SAWS).

Allah (SWT) says, **“Just as We have sent among you a Messenger of yourselves, to recite Our ayat (Signs, verses) to you, and to cleanse you, and to teach you the Book and (the) Wisdom, and to teach you that which you did not know.”** (TMQ, 02:151).

So if a person looks in the mirror he would feel that he has two ends, one looking and the other looking back. When he reads Qur’an he feels that Allah (AWJ) is talking to him like a mind or a soul and is entrusting him with his self, and commanding him not to be unjust to his self.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And whoever earns an odious (deed) or does an injustice to himself (and) thereafter asks Allah His forgiveness, he will find Allah Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 04:110).

Man is surely his self-demonstrator and that clarifies the responsibility of every man of himself that is like a horse that needs to be leashed and disciplined. The *ayahs* should have probably clarified the meaning of man’s responsibility for himself. He demonstrates it and knows everything it does in this life; of good and evil. So does it continue in sin or does he move to save it? While he corrects people, he might as well correct himself for that is his primary responsibility.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Do you command mankind to benignancy and forget yourselves, and you recite the Book? Do you then not consider?”** (TMQ, 02:44).

Every man should remember a moment when death will come, then deeds will end and judgment will begin. Man will not have the ability to push away death from his self and the angels will take it whether he likes it or not.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Who said to their brethren, (i.e. after they returned from fighting) and they (i.e. the hypocrites) (themselves) sat back, “If they had obeyed us, they would not have been killed.” Say, “Then parry yourselves away from death in case you are (truly) sincere.”**“ (TMQ, 03:168).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“And who is more unjust than he who has fabricated against Allah a lie, or has said, “To me it has been revealed,” and nothing has been revealed to him, and who has said, “I will send down the like of what Allah has sent down.” And if you could see, as the unjust (people) are in the perplexities of death and the Angels are stretching out their hands. “Get yourselves out! Today you are recompensed with the torment of degradation for what you were saying against Allah other than the truth, and you used to wax proud against His signs.”**“ (TMQ, 06:93).

It is your responsibility as a human being but it is not just limited to yourself. The responsibility also includes your family.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “All of you are guardians and responsible for your wards.”¹²³

Allah (SWT) says, **“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your own families from a Fire whose fuel is mankind and stones, (and) over which are harsh, severe Angels, who do not disobey Allah in whatever He commands them and who perform whatever they are commanded to.”** (TMQ, 66:06).

Every man of us is responsible for being a good guardian for his self and his family to protect them and protect his wife and kids from the torture of Hell on the Day of Judgment. There is no way for that but to change yourself first.

Allah (SWT) says, **“For him are (angels) taking turns (on end) even before him (Literally: between his two hands) and even behind him, preserving him from the Command of Allah. Surely Allah does not change what is in a people until they change what is in themselves; and when Allah wills (to inflict) an odious (treatment) on a people, then there is no turning back for it; and apart from Him, in no way do they have any patron.”** (TMQ, 13:11).

A man needs to think about how to change and elevate his self from a self-blaming to a self-composed one.

Allah (SWT) says, **“They know an outward (part) of the present life, (Literally: lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) and of the Hereafter they, (it is) they who are heedless. And have they not meditated within themselves? In no way did Allah create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with the Truth and for a stated term; and surely many of mankind are indeed disbelievers in the meeting with their Lord. And have they not traveled in the earth, (and) so looked into how was the end of those even before them? They were more pervasive in power than themselves, and plowed (Literally: stirred up) the earth, and cultivated it more (i.e., populated it and were more eminent) than they themselves have cultivated it; and their Messengers came to them with the supreme evidence (s); so indeed in no way did Allah do (any) injustice to them, but to themselves they used to do injustice.”** (TMQ, 30:07-09).

Let us use the words of the owner of the most benevolent self, the Prophet (SAWS). He spoke in the most eloquent manner about lost selves that are not good unless close to their creator. They are not good unless they are in one of the mosques, especially the three greatest and while listening to the Prophet’s *sunnah*¹²⁴.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Those (are they) whom Allah knows whatever is in their hearts; so veer away from them, and admonish them, and say to them consummate words (Literally: saying) about themselves. And in no way have We sent any Messenger except that he should be obeyed, by the permission of Allah; and if, as they have done an injustice to themselves, they had come to you, so (had) asked forgiveness from Allah, and the Messenger (had) asked forgiveness for them, indeed they would have found Allah Superbly Relenting, Ever-Merciful. (Yet) no, by your Lord, they will not believe until they make you judge regarding what they controvert among themselves. Thereafter they should not find in themselves any restriction about whatever you have decreed, and should submit in full submission.”** (TMQ, 04:63-65).

¹²³ Sahih al-Bukhari. Volume 2, Book 13 (Friday Prayer), Number 18.

¹²⁴ The Prophet’s tradition

- The most benevolent self, is the Prophet's self (SAWS):

It is the best ever to speak about the finest of Allah's creations, the Prophet (SAWS) and the last messenger. Allah (AWJ) mentioned the Prophet by his name "Muhammad" four times in the Qur'an, and a fifth time by his name "Ahmad" which was mentioned as such in the Torah and the Gospel.

Allah (SWT) says, **"And in no way is Muhammad (anything) except a Messenger; the Messengers have already passed away before him. Then, will it be that, in case he dies or is killed, will you turn (Literally: turn (s) over on) on your heels? And whoever turns (Literally: turn (s) over on) on his heels, then he will never harm Allah in anything; and Allah will recompense the thankful."** (TMQ, 03:144).

Allah (SWT) says, **"In no way is Muhammad the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal (Or: Terminator; Last) of the Prophets; and Allah has been Ever-Knowing of everything."** (TMQ, 33:40).

And Allah (SWT) says, **"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and (the ones) who are with him are strict against the steadfast disbelievers, constantly merciful among themselves. You see them constantly bowing themselves, (and) constantly prostrating themselves, seeking Grace from Allah and all-blessed Satisfaction. Their mark is on their faces, (being) the trace of prostration; that is their likeness in the Tawrah; (the Book revealed to Mûsa (Moses), of which the extant Torah is a corruption) and their likeness in the Injil (The Book revealed to ʿIleā (Jesus), of which the extant Gospel is a corruption) is as a plantation that brings out its shoot; then it upholds it; then it grows stout; then it matures level upon its stalks, wonderful to the diligent planters, that through them He may enrage the steadfast disbelievers. Allah has promised the ones of them who have believed and done deeds of righteousness forgiveness and a magnificent reward."** (TMQ, 48:29).

Allah (SWT) also says, **"And (remember) as Isa son of Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) said, "O Seeds (Or: sons) of Israel) surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you sincerely (verifying) that which is before (Literally: between my two hands) me of the Tawrah, (The Book revealed to Mûsa (Moses), of which the extant Torah is a corruption) and a constant bearer of good tidings of a Messenger who will come up even after me, whose name is Ahmad."** Then, as soon as he came to them with the supreme evidence (s), they said, **"This is evident sorcery."** (TMQ, 61:06).

These Qur'an verses clarify that Muhammad ibn-Abdullah is a father to all believers and his wives are their mothers. He is a human just like you, he gets revelations, eats, drinks, sleeps and gets hurt, but is impeccable and cannot sin. Allah (AWJ) taught him and revived his heart with the Qur'an so his self stayed alive after death. He enlightened his heart and until he became a light that illuminates other people's selves.

Allah (SWT) says, **"And is he who was deceased, then We gave him life and made for him a light to walk by among mankind, as one whose likeness is in the darkness (es), (and) he is not coming out of them? Thus whatever the disbelievers were doing was adorned (i.e., made attractive) for them."** (TMQ, 06:122).

The Prophet (SAWS) had the manners of the Qur'an, or in other words, he was a walking Qur'an among the people. He was a good example for whoever was seeking Allah and the hereafter. He was not rude or stonehearted but was caring on all believers, merciful and compassionate. He forgave whoever was unjust to him and was generous to whoever deprived him. He did all the human actions to teach us how to live every moment and how to act in every situation. His life was a true translation to what was mentioned in Allah's book, the Qur'an.

The Prophet (SAWS) taught us to purify our body and our self. He revived our self with the Qur'an so that it enlightened after it was dark and guided after being astray.

The Prophet (SAWS) has a distinguished position, for he is the greatest of all mankind and the *imam* (leader) of the Most Resolute Messengers, and their leader in prayer on the day of *al-mi'raj* at the Aqsa mosque. He is the last of the messengers as there is no messenger after him and no message after his message and no book after the Qur'an (SAWS).

Allah and the angels said prayers for the Prophet¹²⁵ and so he went out of the darkness and into Allah's light (AWJ). Allah guided him to the right path and that is how saying prayers for the Prophet is alone guidance to Allah's right path. Whoever prays for the Prophet once, Allah would pray for him ten times. Thus a Muslim will get out of the darkness and goes into the light because praying for the Prophet is like mentioning Allah and praising Him. This brings about Allah's prayers and His angels which means Allah granting mercy and the angels asking for forgiveness.

Allah (SWT) says, **“In no way is Muhammad the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal (Or: Terminator; Last) of the Prophets; and Allah has been Ever-Knowing of everything. O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance. And extol Him before sunrise and before sunset. He is (The One) Who (responds) to your prayers, and His Angels (respond) (By Allah's command) to bring you out of the darkness (es) into the light; and He has been Ever-Merciful to the believers.”** (TMQ, 33:40-43).

There is also another thing to do so that we can bring about the Prophet's prayers, and that is to spend money for the sake of Allah and to give alms.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Take of their riches a donation to purify them and to cleanse them thereby; and pray for them; surely your prayer is serenity (i.e., tranquility) for them; and Allah is Ever-Hearing, Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ, 09:103).

Alms giving purifies the giver and brings upon him the Prophet's prayers to live in his soul and so he would get nearer to Allah and enter Allah's Mercy (JWA).

Thus, we find that the Prophet (SAWS) is a doorway to repentance to enter paradise and to win Allah's love. Allah has ordered us to obey Him and to follow Him in every word and action and affirmation and that is our only way to win Allah's love (AWJ).

¹²⁵ If Salat is mentioned with reference to Allah, it denotes "Allah's Grace with Mercy;" if it is mentioned with reference to the angels, it denotes "to pray for forgiveness;" and if it is mentioned with reference to other creatures - men, animals, etc., - then it means prayer and supplication. Thus, Allah graces that person with His Mercy who teach people the beneficial knowledge, i.e., the knowledge of Islam; angels pray to Allah to forgive his (or her) sins; and other creatures pray for his (or her) well-being.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Say, “in case you (really) love Allah, then closely follow me, (and) Allah will love you and forgive you your guilty (deeds); and Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” Say, “Obey Allah and the Messenger.”Yet in case they turn away, then surely Allah does not love the disbelievers.” (TMQ, 03:31-32).**

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “I am leaving with you two things that if you follow you will never go astray, both are more important than each other. One is Allah’s Book, a cord extended from heaven to Earth, and the other is my progeny. They will never separate from each other until they appear before me at the Fountain of *al-Kawthar*. So look out how you’ll follow me in them.”¹²⁶

Here we must point out that it is essential to follow the Prophet’s *sunnah* and that Qur’an alone is not enough. The *sunnah* gives details to what is mentioned briefly in the Qur’an.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Whatever (spoils) Allah has conceded His Messenger from the population of the towns, then that is for Allah and for the Messenger, and for the near kinsman, and the orphans, and the indigent, and the wayfarer, so that it may not (make) a circuit between the rich among you. And whatever the Messenger brings you, then take it; and whatever he forbids you, then give over. And be pious to Allah; surely Allah is strict in punishment.” (TMQ, 59:07).**

The Prophet’s *sunnah* has been reviewed along the ages by *hadith* scholars out of which came the six authenticated books. On top of them are *Saheeh al-Bukhary* which is the most authenticated book after the Book of Allah, *Saheeh Muslim*. Besides verifications, like Ahmed Ibn-Hanbal.

The science of *hadith* with the knowledge of men and auditors of strength and verification chains had appeared. A lot of religion scholars exerted so much effort along the ages in order to come out with a *sunnah* that is Israelites-free.

It is prohibited that any claimer would simply argue against *sunnah* or anything that was said by the Prophet (SAWS) or make doubt about its authenticity. It is a serious argument that those in opposition use to justify abandoning our beloved Prophet’s *sunnah*. Those people want to go with part of the religion and abandon the rest, like those who believed in some *ayahs* and didn’t believe in others. What would be the punishment to someone who does this but disgrace in this life and the greatest torture on the Day of Judgment.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And obey Allah and the Messenger that possibly you would be granted mercy.” (TMQ, 03:132).**

Allah (SWT) also says, **“O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and the ones endowed with the command (i.e. those in authority) among you. So in case you contend together about anything, then refer it to Allah and the Messenger, in case you believe in Allah and the Last Day; that is most charitable (i.e. most beneficial) and fairest in interpretation.” (TMQ, 04:59).**

In our talk about the Prophet (SAWS) we can feel our way to the straight Path of the ones Allah has favored. The way to the Path is through obeying Allah and His Prophet (SAWS).

¹²⁶ Narrated by al-Tirmidhi

Allah (SWT) says, **“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then those are with the ones whom Allah has favored of the Prophets, and the ones constantly sincere and the martyr-witnesses, and the righteous; and the fairest escorts those are!” (TMQ, 04:69)**

Allah (SWT) says, **“Whoever obeys the Messenger, then he has already obeyed Allah; and whoever turns away, then in no way have We sent you (as) an ever-preserver over them.” (TMQ, 04:80)**

Allah (SWT) says, **“And prescribe for us in this present (Literally: this lowly (life), i.e., the life of this word) (life) a fair (reward), and in the Hereafter; surely we have Judaized (i.e., to be a Jew) to You.” Said He, “My torment, I afflict with it whomever I decide, and My mercy has embraced everything; so I will soon prescribe it to the ones who are pious and bring the Zakat, (i.e., pay the poor-dues) and the ones who (themselves) believe in Our signs.” (TMQ, 07:156).**

There is no way for guidance but to obey and follow Allah’s Prophet, and there is no way for our self to live but to obey Allah and His Prophet who does not say anything out of his mind, but all what he says has been revealed to him.

Allah (SWT) says, **“O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when He calls you to that which enlivens you; and know that Allah interposes between a person and his heart, and that to Him you will be mustered.” (TMQ, 08:24).**

Therefore, it is necessary that every self would embrace this life and answer Allah’s requests and His Prophet and thus would be granted nearness to Allah, His answer to our every supplication, His Love and His satisfaction.

Ayahs have come to show how obeying the Prophet is in winning Allah’s Mercy.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And keep up the prayer, and bring the Zakat, (Pay the poor-dues) and obey the Messenger, that possibly you would be granted mercy;” (TMQ, 24:56).**

We can conclude here the importance of every one of us being close to his self and to the greatest self of all; Allah’s greatest creations, the one who has won proximity, love, mercy, and compassion of Allah (*AWJ*).

Allah (SWT) says, **“Indeed there has already come to you a Messenger from (among) yourselves. Mighty (i.e., burdensome) to him is whatever distresses you. Most eager is he for your (welfare), to the believers (he is) constantly compassionate, constantly merciful.” (TMQ, 09:128).**

Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*) is a father for every believing self. He is the origin that we should all reach and know and is our only way to know Allah and become close to Him (*AWJ*). Also it is obligatory that every believer would study the Prophet’s *seerah*¹²⁷ and his *sunnah* (*SAWS*). We should then take him as a good example to follow in his life, speech and actions so as to win the love of Allah like the Prophet (*SAWS*) did.

¹²⁷ (the biography of Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*))

We understand from what preceded that the way to knowing Allah starts by getting to know one's self and soul first. Every person should then get to know the self of the greatest of mankind to take him as a good example. Then one should work on correcting his self to be elevated to higher degrees like the self of the greatest of mankind and win his love just by being similar to him. Dear reader, you should know that the only way to correction is the spirit of all spirits, the Qur'an with which we get a real correction.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Just as We have sent among you a Messenger of yourselves, to recite Our ayat (Signs, verses) to you, and to cleanse you, and to teach you the Book and (the) Wisdom, and to teach you that which you did not know.”** (TMQ, 02:151).

2- The Essence of the Soul – The Glorious Qur'an

The human soul has a hint of Allah (SWT), however this soul can not possibly survive without the spirit of Allah (SWT), the main source for the human soul and with something that connects it to Allah. The connection can be established through the words of Allah (SWT), the Glorious Qur'an which revived the soul of the Prophet (SAWS) when he was sent Jibril (AS) in the cave of Hira' and told to read. To which he responded “I do not know how to read” and after repeating it three times Jibril (AS) revealed the first Qur'anic revelation.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “I take refuge with The Lord of the Daybreak, (Literally: the Splitting “of the day”). From the evil of whatever He has created. And from the evil of a dusky night when it overspreads (its gloom). And from the evil of the women who spit on the knots, (i.e., perform malignant witchcraft).”** (TMQ, 113:1-4).

Here was the beginning of the life of the soul of the Prophet (SAWS) by the Qur'an entering it just as air enters the body and revives it after death.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And is he who was deceased, then We gave him life and made for him a light to walk by among mankind, as one whose likeness is in the darkness (es), (and) he is not coming out of them? Thus whatever the disbelievers were doing was adorned (i.e., made attractive) for them.”** (TMQ, 6 :122).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“And We revealed to Mûsa, (saying), “Set forth with My bondmen by night. Surely you will be closely followed.””** (TMQ, 26:52).

The Quran is light, and with it the spirits and souls have their paths illuminated towards the straight path.

From the above, we conclude that the Qur'an is in actuality the true essence of all souls and its light from Allah Almighty guiding and lighting the hearts and souls. And whoever is not rewarded by Allah (SWT) with such light, then there is no light for them any other way.

If this light enters the heart, the light of the soul stays with the person and lights their path towards the straight path and is their guide on the day of judgment until they enter paradise and are about to bask in the glory and magnificence of Allah Almighty.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, repent to Allah in honest repentance; it may be that your Lord will expiate for you your ill deeds and will cause you to enter Gardens from beneath which rivers run, on a Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and the ones who believed with him. Their light will be proceeding along before (Literally: between their hands) them and on their right (hands), (and) they say, “Our Lord, perfect for us our light and forgive us; surely You are Ever-Determiner over everything.””** (TMQ, 66:8).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“(On) the Day (when) you see the male believers and female believers, their light proceeding along before (Literally: between their hands) them and on their right hands. “Good tidings for you today! Gardens from beneath which rivers run, eternally (abiding) therein; it is that which is the tremendous triumph.””** (TMQ, 57 :12).

All of the human souls need the light of the words of Allah and the light of the Prophet (SAWS) to leave the darkness to the light, in order to reach the ultimate light.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you Population of the Book, (Or: Family of the Book, i.e., the Jews and Christians) our Messenger has already come up to you; he makes evident to you many things you have been concealing of the Book, and he is clement about many things. A light has already come up to you from Allah, and an evident Book.”** (TMQ, 5:15).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“The ones who closely follow the Messenger, the Prophet, the illiterate one, whom they find written down in their presence in the Tawrah (the Book revealed to Mûsa (Moses) and the Injil, (the Book revealed to Îsa (Jesus) commanding them to beneficence, and forbidding them malfeasance, making lawful for them the good things, and prohibiting for them the wicked things, and ridding them of their obligation and the shackles that were upon them. So the ones who believe in him, and rally to him (in assistance) and vindicate him, and closely follow the light that has been sent down with him, those are they (who) are the prosperers.””** (TMQ, 7:157).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“Alif, Lam, Mîm, Ra (These are the names of letters of the Arabic alphabet, and only Allah knows their meaning here). A Book We have sent down to you that you may bring mankind out of the darkness (es) to the light by the permission of their Lord, to the path of The Ever- Mighty, The Ever-Praiseworthy.”** (TMQ, 14:1).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“He is (The One) Who keeps sending down upon His Bondman signs, supremely evident (signs), that He may bring you out of the darkness (es) into the light; and surely Allah is indeed to you Ever-Compassionate, Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 57:9).

The Prophet (SAWS) was a walking Qur’an among the people, through which Allah (SWT) provided salvation for the human souls from the darkness of ignorance and disbelief to the light and clarity of belief in Allah (SWT). This light is like that in a lamp in a glass that shines as if it were a magnificent planet, lighting the surroundings from a blessed tree, neither from the east nor the west. This lamp’s oil lights although it has not been touched by fire or a spark.

◆ The Glorious Qur'an

The Prophet (SAWS) says, “The advantage of the words of Allah over those of people, is like the advantage of Allah over people.” [Reported by ad-Daramy]

The words of Allah are suitable for every time and every place, and whoever loves those words then he truly loves Allah. Similarly, whoever disobeys those words then he is disobeying Allah. By hating those words, it is as if you hate Allah. Those words are the true straight path with the clear guiding light which can not lead anyone astray. The words of Allah are also the clarification for many things, and this book is undoubtedly the guidance to those who are pious. The Qur'an will provide pardon from hellfire to those who valued it and memorized it on the day of judgment. Paradise is comprised of levels that are the same number as the verses of the Qur'an.

We know that the Qur'an is preserved by Allah (SWT) until the day of judgment. No hand will alter any of its words. And no mind will input their ideals and values in it. Not a single word has change in over 1,400 years. The Qur'an found in Cairo will be the same as that found in Japan or China. This indeed is the miracle of the Prophet (SAWS), that the words of the Qur'an are suitable for every time and every place and for the human nature. For you to judge by the Qur'an is the ultimate fairness.

The Qur'an serves as a reminder, to whoever wants Allah (SWT) to talk to him/her. It is also the basis for the guidance of anyone. It elevates the souls and spirits of people and connects them to the Lord of the universe. The Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet (SAWS) over the period of 23 years, 13 of which were in Makkah, and 10 years were in Madinah. The Prophet (SAWS) received the revelation through Jibril (AS).

The Prophet (SAWS) used to teach the companions (RA) where to place each verses in the right place until his last sermon.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Prohibited to you are carrion, (i.e. dead meat) and blood, and the flesh of swine, and what has been acclaimed to other than Allah, and the strangled, and the beaten (to death), and the toppled (to death), and the gored (to death), and that eaten by wild beasts of prey-excepting what you have immolated-and whatever has been slain on the altars (for the idols), and that you adjure division (i.e. by gambling with arrows or in any similar way) by divining: that is immorality. Today the ones who have disbelieved have despaired of your religion, so do not be apprehensive of them and be apprehensive of Me. Today I have completed your religion for you, and I have perfected My favor on you, and I am satisfied with Islam as a religion for you. And whoever is constrained in scantiness, (i.e., compelled by need) without unfairly (inclining) to vice, then surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 5:3).

The order of the verses in the Qur'an as we currently see it was not the result of anyone's effort but was assigned to be that way. The Qur'an consists of 114 chapters, starting with the opening chapter, then the long seven chapters and ending with the short chapters then the chapter of al-Nass.

The first verse of al-Fatiha (In the name of Allah, The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful) is considered a separate verse only in that chapter, yet in the rest of the Qur'an it is not considered a separate verse. The first chapter, al-Fatiha, is the mother of the Qur'an as it combines the main three purposes of the Qur'an which are :

- 1- Monotheism => Belief in Allah
- 2- Stories => Belief in the angels, prophets, books, day of judgment and destiny
- 3- Commands, allowances and prohibitions => Good deeds

From here we conclude that one third of the Qur'an is dedicated to teach people about their Creator, which is the basis of their belief and every good deed that is derived from that. The Qur'an also teaches us about the unknown which mankind knows nothing of in order to clear a number of misconceptions in people's minds.

So if the Qur'an states something that goes against what people think and believe in, then the Qur'an is accurate undoubtedly and the doubt should be in anything else. The Qur'an is the words of Allah (SWT), the Creator of all.

This is why, Allah (SWT) started the chapter of al-Fatiha in what can be translated as, **“Alif, Lam, Mîm. (These are the names of three letters from the Arabic alphabet, probably indicating that this inimitable Revelation, the Qur'an, is made of this Arabic alphabet. Only Allah Knows their meaning here). That is the Book, there is no suspicion about it, a guidance to the pious. Who believe in the Unseen, and keep up the prayer, and expend of what We have provided them.”** (TMQ, 2:1-3).

The absolute truth is what came in the book of Allah. For Allah (SWT) is the Creator and He knows all. No one participated in the creation with Allah. No one else knows but Allah. For Allah knows and we do not.

So if a reader understands a Qur'anic verse without realizing the meaning which it added to him, then he really did not understand it. The Qur'an was not revealed to tell us about things which we know and understand well, instead it was revealed to teach us about what we do not know or understand and to correct our flawed understandings and misconceptions in many issues.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Allah expunges riba (Interest or other unlawful) and He augments donations, and Allah does not love every most disbelieving most-vicious person.”** (TMQ, 2 :276).

The above may contradict what many people think, and what the bank statements declare. Those bank accounts double up the interest on all saving accounts the longer they are in the bank. Giving away money in charity decreases one's fortune, yet the Quran introduces a revolutionary concept where giving away money in charity for the sake of Allah's is better than taking loans with interest or other interest related activities. A believer believes what the Qur'an instructs him to do, regardless of what the current understanding of people or the economy is.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“So, in case you do not perform (that), then take notice of a war from Allah and His Messenger (against you). And in case you repent, then you will have the capitals of your riches; you will not do injustice, and you will not be done injustice.”** (TMQ, 2 :279).

From the above we see that a Muslim must approach the Qur'an in several ways.

- 1- Reading the Glorious Qur'an well with comprehension and contemplation

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And surely it is indeed a Remembrance to you and to your people, and surely you (all) will eventually be questioned (about it).” (TMQ, 43:44).**

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“The ones to whom We have brought the Book recite it with its true recitation: those believe in it; and whoever disbelieves in it, then those are they (who are) the losers.” (TMQ, 2 :121).**

- 2- Studying the interpretation and meanings of the Qur'an and understanding its relevance.
- 3- Memorizing it
- 4- Abiding by its lessons and wisdom
- 5- Teaching it to others

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “The best among you is one who learns the Qur'an and then teaches it.” [Reported by Abi Dawud]

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “On the day of judgment, the Qur'an and its people who have been abiding by it will be brought forth preceded by al-Baqara and Al-Imran chapters, as if they are two dark shadows with a split in between protecting their holder (one who read them often or memorized them).” [Reported by Muslim]

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “A person who memorized the Qur'an is asked to read the Qur'an as they used to read it in their lifetime, for their status is determined by the last verse they reach.” [Reported by at-Tirmidhi]

So, a man reads the Qur'an and is elevated in status, the difference between each status is like that between the earth and heavens.

In light of the above, it is vital that each one of us have a daily section of the Qur'an to read and memorize in order not to be among those who deserted the Qur'an. Hopefully, that daily section will increase gradually.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And the Messenger has said, “O Lord! Surely my people have taken to themselves this Qur'an as a thing to be forsaken.” (TMQ, 25:30)**

Abu-Bakr as-Sedeeq (RA) said, “Whoever finished the Qur'an in forty days, then that person has indeed deserted it.”

A Muslim must know that the Qur'an contains several miraculous signs in science, linguistics and even economy. The Qur'an is the source of information and guidance, without a doubt. The Qur'an provides guidance and clarity in many sciences for mankind. Whoever seeks their life, can learn about it in the Qur'an. And whosoever seeks their end, they must read the Qur'an. And whoever is after them both, then the Qur'an has all a Muslim needs from the unknown as well as other sciences and guidance which a person may need in his lifetime.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And in no way is there a beast (moving) in the earth nor a bird flying with its two wings except that they are nations like you. In no way have We neglected anything whatever in the Book; thereafter to their Lord they will be mustered.”** (TMQ, 6 :38).

Your enthusiasm towards the book of Allah (SWT) is in reality your enthusiasm towards Allah. Your closeness to the book of Allah is basically an indication of how close you are to Allah. Your knowledge of the book and words of Allah is in essence a translation of your knowledge of Allah.

This is why while we are discussing belief and knowledge of Allah, it was important to discuss the words of Allah and their significance in relevance to one’s belief in Allah. A Muslim must strive and work hard to learn and memorize the book of Allah. Please note that this search and effort must be with the intention of learning more about Allah (SWT).

In Conclusion

The section on belief in Allah comes to end. In this section, we discussed evidence of Allah’s essence and some of the guidelines in understanding the verses related to Allah. The section covers the world of the command which is connected to Allah, the spirit starting with the human spirit and soul. An example was provided for the best soul which is that of the Prophet (SAWS). The last part of this section covered the Glorious Qur’an and its connection to Allah, and the objective behind that which is learning about the Prophet (SAWS) and the words of Allah (SWT) and satisfying the first requirement from the belief in Allah.

We move to the second part which deals with proof of the attributes of Allah (SWT) which are combined in the beautiful name of Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, be pious to Allah, and let (every) self look to what it has forwarded for the morrow, and be pious to Allah. Surely Allah is Ever-Cognizant of whatever you do. And do not be as (the ones) who forgot Allah, so He caused them to forget their selves; those are they who are the immoral.”** (TMQ, 59:18-19).

- The Human Self and Soul

“Not equal are the companions (i.e., inhabitants) of the Fire and the companions of the Garden; the companions of the Garden are they who are the triumphant.” (TMQ, 59 :20).

“If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, indeed you would have seen it submissive, sundered apart out of apprehension of Allah; and those similitudes We strike for mankind, that possibly they would meditate.” (TMQ, 59 :21).

- **The Essence of the Souls: The Glorious Qur'an**

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“He is Allah, (other than Whom) there is no god except He. He is The Knower of the Unseen and the Witnessed. He is The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 59 :22).

- **The Worlds of the Unknown and the Seen. The attributes of Mercy and Giving.**

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“He is Allah, (other than Whom) there is no god except He. He is The King, The Superb Holy, The Peace, (i.e., The Giver of Peace) The Supreme Believer, (i.e., The Giver of Belief) The Supremely Hegemonic, The Ever-Mighty, The Superb Potentate, The Supremely Proud. (i.e., The Justly Proud) All Extolment be to Allah above whatever they associate (with Him).”** (TMQ, 59 : 23).

- **Attributes of Power and Dominion**

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“He is Allah, The Creator, The Initiator, The Supreme Fashioner. To Him (belong) the Fairest Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth extols to Him, and He is The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise.”** (TMQ , 59 :24).

- **Attributes of Creation, Resurrection and Judgment**

From here, we move from learning about Allah and the world of the command (soul – spirit) then the essence of the souls (the Glorious Qur'an) to the study of proof of the attributes of Allah (SWT) through the study of the beautiful names of Allah. This study is divided, based on the verses, into:

- 1- Absolute higher attributes
- 2- Attributes of Giving and Mercy
- 3- Attributes of Power and Dominion
- 4- Attributes of Creation, Resurrection and Judgment.

2- Evidence of Allah's Attributes:

Introduction

When discussing the attributes of Allah (SWT) we are in fact discussing the beautiful names of Allah which combine His attributes mentioned in a hadith where the Prophet (SAWS) said, “Allah has ninety nine names, one hundred short of one. Whoever memorized them will enter paradise.” [Reported by al-Bukhary]

A) The Attribute of the ‘All-Merciful’

“Allah” is the name of Allah above any other name. While The All-Merciful is a name as well as an attribute at the same time, however, the rest of the beautiful names are attributes.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “Invoke Allah, or invoke The All-Merciful. Whichever you call upon, so to Him (belong) the Fairest Names.” And do not be (too) loud in your prayer nor hushed therein, and seek for a way between that.”** (TMQ, 17:110).

The All-Merciful is used in many verses in the Glorious Qur'an instead of "Allah".

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"The All-Merciful. He taught the Qur'an. He created man."** (TMQ, 55:1-3).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **"Who created seven heavens as strata (i.e., layers, one above the other). In no way can you see in the creation of The All-Merciful any disparity; so return your gaze; (Literally: "your" beholding) do you see any rent?"** (TMQ, 67:3).

The above verses let us learn about the magnitude of mercy and kindness of Allah (SWT), who is the ultimate source of mercy. This is why mercy is not just an attribute of Allah, but also a name of Allah. Indeed, Allah's mercy is so great for he is the All-Merciful.

B) The Attribute of 'He who there is no god except He'

This is a name which combines the meanings of monotheism, which is among the most significant attributes of Allah the Almighty. Perhaps the best example of what it really means is found in the chapter of al-Ikhlās. This chapter is equal to one third of the Qur'an and it cleanses a person from disbelief.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"Say, "He is Allah, The Only One. Allah, The Everlasting Sovereign (The Arabic word is sometimes taken to mean all that is mentioned in verses 3 and 4). He has not begotten and has not been begotten. And to Him none could be co-equal."** (TMQ, 112:1-4).

This name is often seen right after "Allah" and precedes all the other beautiful names of Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"He is Allah, (other than Whom) there is no god except He. He is The King, The Superb Holy, The Peace, (i.e., The Giver of Peace) The Supreme Believer, (i.e., The Giver of Belief) The Supremely Hegemonic, The Ever-Mighty, The Superb Potentate, The Supremely Proud. (i.e., The Justly Proud) All Extolment be to Allah above whatever they associate (with Him). He is Allah, The Creator, The Initiator, The Supreme Fashioner. To Him (belong) the Fairest Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth extols to Him, and He is The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise."** (TMQ, 59:23-24).

From here, we conclude that among the most important attributes of Allah are those of mercy and oneness. Hence, we must clearly understand those two attributes for they pave the way to understanding the remainder of the names.

C) What it means to "learn" the names

By learning the names, it is meant to understand and clearly comprehend the meanings of the names as well as their implications. It is imperative to strongly believe and use them in supplication as well as in our everyday life.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **"And to Allah (belong) the Fairest Names, so invoke Him by them, and leave behind the ones who blaspheme His Names; they will soon be recompensed (for) whatever they were doing."** (TMQ, 7:180).

Of course by learning and memorizing the name here, what is meant is to do so by one's heart not by the tongue. When one really learns and feels the attributes with his heart, they will always be in the back of his mind calming him and reminding him of the magnificence and mercy of Allah. Once the names have been learnt and memorized, it is imperative that we always think of them and call Allah by them in every situation in our lives.

D) Calling Allah by His beautiful names

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance. And extol Him before sunrise and before sunset.”** (TMQ, 33:41-42).

We know that *dhikr* combines several types of mentioning and reciting the names of Allah such as saying *Alhamdu-lillah* (all thanks be to Allah), *Subhan Allah* (All Glory be to Allah), reading the Qur'an, asking Allah to send His peace and blessings upon the Prophet (SAWS) among other things. However, the original meaning of *dhikr* is that of mentioning Allah (SWT) by His names and attributes.

So if in the Glorious Qur'an there is a command to mention Allah's names then this command is followed by a command to do *tasbeeh* (say Subhan Allah) then this means to say something like the following:

Subhan Allah The Sovereign
Subhan Allah The Most Holy
Subhan Allah The Giver of Peace

Alhamdu-lillah The Ever-Great
Alhamdu-lillah The Ever-Magnificent
Alhamdu-lillah The Superbly Relenting

The same applies to reciting the names of Allah before doing anything, for it is imperative to recite the appropriate name for what a person is about to do. So if a student for example is about to study then he can say, 'In the Name of Allah... The All-Merciful, The All-Knowing.' If a man is after making a living, then at the beginning of the day he may say, 'In the Names of Allah... The All-Merciful, The Superb Provider, The Ultimate trustee.'

If you are afraid for something or someone, then you may say, 'In the Name of Allah... The All-Merciful, The Ever Preserving.'

This way we learn to begin our days and our ever deeds with a name of the beautiful names and attributes of Allah that suits the work we are about to do, seeking Allah's blessings and guidance over what we are about to embark on. This is why the Prophet (SAWS) used to say, "Every matter which is begun without praising Allah is dispirited" [Reported by Ibn Majjah].

This means that any good coming out of this matter is gone as Satan has been present in it since the name of Allah was not praised, hence dismissing Satan. The Hadith left the "name" of Allah open, which means one can use any of the names and attributes of Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And startle whomever of them you can with your voice, and rally against them your horsemen and your foot (soldiers); and be a partner with them in (their) riches and (their) children, and promise them!” And in no way does Ash-Shaytan (The all-vicious, i.e., the Devil) promise them anything except delusion.”** (TMQ, 17:64).

The mention of Allah’s name when you enter your house or before you eat is a sure way to dismiss Satan from your house for the night. If a Muslim seeks refuge in Allah from Satan before meeting with his/her spouse, then Satan is prohibited from coming near your family and children.

Blessings mean that Satan does not share mankind in their deeds and lives. To maintain the blessings in our lives, we must mention the names of Allah and praise Allah constantly using His beautiful names as instructed in the Qur’an by Allah Himself.

E) The Glorious Qur’an on the Beautiful Names

The Glorious Qur’an does not mention all of the beautiful names which were mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet (SAWS), however it mentions more than two thirds of them and some names came in the form of a verb (The Expander).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely your Lord outspreads the provision to whomever He decides and estimates (it); surely He has been Ever-Cognizant of (and) Ever-Beholding His bondmen.”** (TMQ, 17:30).

And some of the names came in the form of undefined attributes.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely, As-safa and Al-Marwah (i.e. two hills near the Kaabah) are among the way marks of Allah. So whoever makes the Pilgrimage (i.e. Hajj) to the Home, or makes the Visitation, (Umrah, sometimes called the minor pilgrimage) then there is no fault in him to circumambulate them; and whoever volunteers any (optional) charity, then surely Allah is Thankful, Ever-Knowing..”** (TMQ, 2:158).

Ever-Knowing is an attribute related to Allah’s name of The Ever-Knowing, while Thankful is a noun for the attribute of giving thanks and Allah’s name for this characteristic is The Appreciative. It is also important to note that the Glorious Qur’an combined some attributes with each other and put them in a particular order. For example, The Ever Hearing and The Ever beholding were mentioned in that order in four verses.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“All Extolment be (to Him), Who made His bondman to set forth by night from the Inviolable Mosque to the Further (Literally: Remotest) Mosque, around which We have blessed, that We might show him (some) of Our signs. Surely He, Ever He, is The Ever-Hearing, The Ever-Beholding.”** (TMQ, 17:1).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And Allah decrees with the Truth, and the ones they invoke apart from Him will not decree about anything. Surely Allah, Ever He, is The Ever- Hearing, The Ever-Beholding.”** (TMQ, 40:20).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely the ones who dispute concerning the signs of Allah without any all-binding authority having come up to them, decidedly in their breasts is nothing except pride; in no way will they be attaining (Literally: reaching) it, (i.e., the attainment of the fulfillment of their pride, or harming the Prophet, or attaining Prophet hood) so seek refuge in Allah; surely He, Ever He, is The Ever-Hearing, The Ever-Beholding.”** (TMQ, 40: 56).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“The Originator of the heavens and the earth- He has made for you, of yourselves, pairs, (i.e., spouses) and of the cattle (Anaam includes cattle, camels, sheep and goats) (also) pairs, whereby (Literally: wherein) He propagates you. There is not anything like Him (whatsoever), and He is The Ever-Hearing, The Ever-Beholding.”** (TMQ, 42:11).

In all of the verses, the order has always been preserved so that The Ever-Hearing precedes The Ever Beholding. We note that some attributes are preceded with “The Best”, “The Most Wise” or “The Most Merciful” in some verses.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And the ones who emigrated in the way of Allah, thereafter were killed or died, indeed Allah will definitely provide them with a fair provision; and surely Allah is indeed The Most Charitable of providers.”** (TMQ, 22:58).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“He said, “should I keep him in custody to you except as I kept his brother in custody even before to you? Yet, Allah is The Most Charitable as Preserver and He is The Most Merciful of the merciful”.”** (TMQ, 12:64)

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And in case there is a section of you who have believed in what (i.e. in the Message) I have been sent with, and a section who have not believed, then be patient till Allah shall judge between us; and He is The Most Charitable of judges”.”** (TMQ, 7:87).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And Nûh (Noah) called out to his Lord; so said, ““Lord! Surely my son is of my family, and surely Your promise is the truth, and You are The Most Judicious of judges”.”** (TMQ, 11:45).

Upon reading the Qur’an, we must continue to use the names and attributes of Allah, and use different ways to mention them in our daily speech as well as in our supplications.

Several attributes were mentioned together at the end of the chapter of Al-Hashr where Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“He is Allah, (other than Whom) there is no god except He. He is The Knower of the Unseen and the Witnessed. He is The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. He is Allah, (other than Whom) there is no god except He. He is The King, The Superb Holy, The Peace, (i.e., The Giver of Peace) The Supreme Believer, (i.e., The Giver of Belief) The Supremely Hegemonic, The Ever-Mighty, The Superb Potentate, The Supremely Proud. (i.e., The Justly Proud) All Extolment be to Allah above whatever they associate (with Him). He is Allah, The Creator, The Initiator, The Supreme Fashioner. To Him (belong) the Fairest Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth extols to Him, and He is The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise.”** (TMQ, 59:22-24).

3- Proof of Allah's actions

How to understand Allah's actions

A Muslim should not get involved in the *hows* and *whys* of Allah's actions. For Allah The Almighty has infinite power which we, as mere humans, can not possibly begin to fathom. There is nothing on earth or in the heavens which may come as an obstacle to Allah. Allah does not need any reasoning or excuses. Creating an entire nation is like creating a single ant. Matters to Allah are all the same, there is nothing easy or difficult, large or small, hard or smooth. There is no impossible.

Questions on how things happen and why things happen apply to us, creatures of Allah. Yet they do not apply in any shape or form to Allah, The Creator.

4) Characteristics of those who knew Allah and believed in them. He (SWT) loves them and they love Him.

Introduction

When seeking knowledge, one must always remind themselves that the purpose behind their learning process is to apply this knowledge in their activities and deeds. This fits well with our belief since the objective of faith is the translation of that faith in good and righteous deeds. Another objective should be to please Allah (SWT) through those deeds and through learning more about him as well as mentioning His names often.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “in case you (really) love Allah, then closely follow me, (and) Allah will love you and forgive you your guilty (deeds); and Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” Say, “Obey Allah and the Messenger. “Yet in case they turn away, then surely Allah does not love the disbelievers.” (TMQ, 3:31-32).**

The above is the only verse that clearly demonstrates the way to win Allah's love, to do so one must follow the most loved one to Allah, the Prophet (SAWS). By following, one must take the Prophet (SAWS) as a role model in everything he says and does, and in all one's decisions. We all must follow his lead in every issue, big or small. By following him as a model, we will also learn more about his personality, characteristics and deeds so that he becomes more beloved to us than our own selves.

Our love then moves to everyone who the Prophet (SAWS) loves such as the companions, who we learn from and take as models as well. We must note that one's love to prophets and messengers as well as the pious among us will grant us the blessing of being with them in paradise. Who would any of us wish to be resurrected with more than those whom we love?

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then those are with the ones whom Allah has favored of the Prophets, and the ones constantly sincere and the martyr-witnesses, and the righteous; and the fairest escorts those are!” (TMQ, 4:69) .**

The companions of the Prophet (SAWS) were very happy with those glad tidings, although they were disheartened at being separated with their beloved, the Prophet (SAWS) who is granted the highest level in paradise.

The Glorious Qur'an mentions once those who love and are loved by Allah (SWT).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, whoever of you turns back from His Allah's) religion, then Allah will eventually come up with a people He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers, mightily proud towards the disbelievers, striving in the way of Allah; and they do not fear the blame of (any) blamer. That is the Grace of Allah (that) He brings to whomever He decides; and Allah is Ever-Embracing, Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ, 5:54).

People who have proven their love to Allah and their love for Him has been proven as well, are true believers whose creed and faith has filled their hearts. They all believe that true victory and accomplishment will be for Allah (SWT), His Prophet and the believers. This confidence comes to those who are close to Allah while those who are not close to Allah are deprived from it. This belief strengthens their hearts and provides them with courage and strength in order to strive for the cause of Allah (SWT) side by side with their brothers and sister until they are awarded martyrdom. Such people are not concerned with pleasing or impressing others; they truly believe that victory and blessings will be granted to those who are on Allah's side.

Note:

When we seek the love of Allah (SWT), we are in fact seeking that this love completely takes over our hearts with no partner (money, children or other worldly matters). The Prophet of Allah (SAWS) said, “None of you is a believer until Allah and His Prophet are more loved to him than anything (or anyone) else.” [Reported by Ahmad]

The Prophet (SAWS) also said, “Love Allah for what he blessed and promised to bless you with, and love me out of your love for Allah and love my descendents out of love for me.” [Reported by at-Tirmidhi]

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “In case your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, and your spouses, and your kinsmen, and riches that you have scored (Literally: committed) and commerce whose slackening you are apprehensive of, and dwellings you are satisfied with, in case these are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way, then await till Allah comes up with His Command; and Allah does not guide the immoral people.”**” (TMQ, 9:24).

Who did Allah prove His love to in The Glorious Qur'an??

Allah proves His love to nine groups of believers in seventeen verses; which is the same number of *rak'ahs* (one unit of Islamic prayer) in the day and night.

Group One:

Allah mentioned His love to those who do *ihسان* (perfection) in five verses.

Group Two:

Allah mentioned His love to the pious believers in two verses, and His love to the patient ones in two verses.

Group Three:

Allah mentioned His love to four types of believers, each mentioned in a verse (Those who rely on Allah – Those who are clean – Those who are patient – Those who fight for the sake of Allah side by side)

Allah also mentioned His love to two types once in one verse; the repentant ones and the ones who are clean.

Group One: Those who do ihsan

This is a group of the believers who Allah mentioned His love to them five times in the Glorious Qur'an.

- 1- Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And expend in the way of Allah; and do not cast (yourselves) by your (own) hands into perdition (i.e., by neglecting to expend in the way of Allah), and do fair deeds; surely Allah loves the fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 2:195).
- 2- Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“That is a nation (that) has already passed away; it shall have whatever it earned, and you shall have whatever you have earned, and you shall not be questioned about whatever they were doing.”** (TMQ, 3:134).
- 3- Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And to each is a direction towards which he turns, so race with each other for the charitable (deeds). Wherever you may be, Allah will come up with you (i.e., bring you) altogether; surely Allah is Ever-Determiner over everything.”** (TMQ, 3:148).
- 4- Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“It is not a fault in the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness whatever they may (have fed) on (in the past) when they are (now) pious, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, thereafter are pious, and believe, thereafter are pious, and do fair deeds; and Allah loves the fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 5:93).
- 5- Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“So, for their breaking their compact, We cursed them and We made their hearts hard. They pervert the Wordings from their contexts, (i.e. original meanings) and they have forgotten a portion of what they were reminded. And you will not cease viewing some treacherous (act) on their part, except a few of them. Yet be clement towards them and pardon; surely Allah loves the fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 5:13).

Definition of Ihsan:

In order to understand how the people who do *ihsan* and are valued and loved by Allah (SWT), we must come to clearly understand the meaning of *ihsan*. When the Prophet (SAWS) was asked about *ihsan* he said, *“Ihsan* is to worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you can not see Him, He can still see you.” And truly this is the epitome of faith and conviction in Allah. Hence, when faith transcends into one's actions then it is truly a solid conviction.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Not at all! (But) eventually you will know. Again (Literally: Thereafter) not at all! (But) eventually you will know. Not at all! (But) if you know with the knowledge of certitude. Indeed you will definitely see Hell-Fire.**

(Again), (Literally: Thereafter) indeed you will definitely see it with the eye of certitude, Thereafter indeed you will definitely be questioned upon that Day concerning (the worldly) bliss.” TMQ, 102:3-8).

The above verses demonstrates that faith reaches certitude by knowledge of the unknown which Allah (SWT) told us about in the Qur’an and the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAWS), then faith increases until it reaches the epitome of certitude where a believer sees those unknowns with his/her heart. The verse is referring to those who do *ihsan* in “Indeed you will definitely see Hell-Fire”, for the *ihsan* has been translated into their belief and conviction in what Allah (SWT) told us about the day of judgment as if they can see it with their own eyes. Indeed, this is *ihsan*. For those people are worshipping Allah as if they can see Him (SWT) and the unknowns which He (SWT) mentioned in the Qur’an as well. This is the higher level of *ihsan*. The lower level of *ihsan*, on the other hand, is to worship Allah knowing that He (SWT) can see you.

Characteristics of those who do *ihsan*

If we go over the characteristics mentioned in the previously mentioned five verses, we can learn more about the attributes of those people who do *ihsan*. They are:

- 1- Maintaining one’s soul and not harming it in anyway.
- 2- Spending in the cause of Allah in secret/public during the day/night.
- 3- Controlling one’s temper and excusing the ignorance of people in hope of attaining Allah’s pardon yet without allowing the unfairness to leave a scar in their hearts. For this is not mere forgiveness but complete and utter pardon so that there is nothing left in one’s soul but hope for goodness for everyone.
- 4- Doing good in every action and saying, especially to those who have mistreated us. We respond to an insult in kindness.
- 5- Rushing to seeking Allah’s forgiveness after committing any sin without any hesitation in hope of attaining Allah’s forgiveness and paradise.
- 6- Fighting for the cause of Allah and enduring with patience all the afflictions.
- 7- Constantly making supplication in seeking forgiveness for the sins, as well as seeking Allah’s blessings in attaining victory and success.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“It is not a fault in the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness whatever they may (have fed) on (in the past) when they are (now) pious, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, thereafter are pious, and believe, thereafter are pious, and do fair deeds; and Allah loves the fair-doers.” (TMQ, 5:93).**

The verses have demonstrated several levels in rank and cleansing.

First Level

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“It is not a fault in the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness whatever they may (have fed) on (in the past) when they are (now) pious, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, thereafter are pious, and believe, thereafter are pious, and do fair deeds; and Allah loves the fair-doers.” (TMQ, 5:93).**

Allah (SWT) says also about them what can be translated as, **“And the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness, those are the companions of the Garden; they are therein eternally (abiding).”** (TMQ, 2:82).

Second Level

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“It is not a fault in the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness whatever they may (have fed) on (in the past) when they are (now) pious, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, thereafter are pious, and believe, thereafter are pious, and do fair deeds; and Allah loves the fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 5:93).

To be elevated to such a rank, such people actually race towards doing good and righteous deeds out of faith and piety. Such people check their intention to ensure that it is for the sake of Allah solely before doing such righteous and pious deeds. This is what **“they are pious and believe”** means.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “Surely I am only a mortal the like of you: it is revealed to me that surely your God is only One God. So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, then let him do righteous deed (s) and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord.”** (TMQ, 18:110).

After the good and righteous deeds, comes goodness and piety which holds them away from making any bad deeds which may anger Allah (SWT). The previous level is solely doing good and righteous deeds, while this level is not only doing that but also abstaining from doing any bad deeds in order to avoid angering Allah (SWT). This is the level of the pious ones **“let him do righteous deed(s) and not associate anyone in the worship of His Lord”**.

Level Three

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“It is not a fault in the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness whatever they may (have fed) on (in the past) when they are (now) pious, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, thereafter are pious, and believe, thereafter are pious, and do fair deeds; and Allah loves the fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 5:93).

This is a level where faith and piety increase in the heart so that in addition to doing good and righteous deeds, more piety is yet to be found. In this case, both the deeds and the faith are truly elevated to the rank of *ihsan* “thereafter are pious, and do fair deed” so faith turns into *ihsan* and one’s deeds reaches the highest level of goodness.

The Second Group: It Includes the Pious and the Equitable

This group includes two kinds of believers, the pious, and the equitable. Allah’s love (SWT) to each of those groups was mentioned in three places in the Qur’an.

The Pious:

Allah (SWT) says, **“Yes indeed, (but) whoever fulfils his covenant and is pious (to Allah), then surely Allah loves the pious.”** (TMQ, 3:76).

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And an announcement from Allah and His Messenger to mankind on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage that Allah is quit of the associators (Those who associate others with Allah) and so is His Messenger. So in case you repent, then it is more charitable (i.e., better) for you; and in case you turn away, then know that you are unable to be defiant to Allah; and give tidings to the ones who have disbelieved of a painful torment. Excepting the ones of the associators (with) whom you covenanted, thereafter they did not fail (Literally: diminish anything) you in anything nor backed anyone against you. So complete (Literally: perfect (verb) your covenant with them till their (extended) period; surely Allah loves the pious ..So, when the prohibiting months are drawn away, (Literally: stripped away) then kill the associators wherever you find them, and take them, and detain them, and sit (in wait) for them at every place of observation (i.e., ambush). But, in case they repent, and keep up the prayer, and bring the Zakat, (i.e., pay the obligatory poor-dues) then let them go their way; (Literally: pass on their way) surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful ..And in case any of the associators seeks of you neighborly (protection), then grant him neighborly (protection) till he hears the Words of Allah; thereafter convey him to his secure place. That (is) for that they are a people who do not know. How should the associators have a covenant in the Meeting with Allah and in the sight of His Messenger? Excepting the ones (with) whom you covenanted at the Inviolable Mosque; so, as long as they go straight with you, so go straight with them; surely Allah loves the pious..” (TMQ, 9:3-7).**

Definition of Piety:

Piety is to watch Allah (*SWT*) when alone and in public, in ease and in hardship, in good times and in bad times, and during misery. It includes four pillars based on the six pillars of Faith, which are:

1. Fear from The Sublime, Allah (*AWJ*¹²⁸), which is based on believing in Allah (*AWJ*).
2. Following the revelation which is the Qur’an and the *sunnah* (the Prophet’s tradition). This is based on believing in the prophets, the books and the angels.
3. Gratification with the least of sustenance that Allah (*AWJ*) has bestowed upon a person. It is based on faith and destiny.
4. Getting ready for the day of departure, and that is the day we meet Allah (*AWJ*), when the Creator judges whom he created for major and minor things. This is based on believing in the Day of Judgment.

Piety is found in the heart, brain, and the spirit that we have discussed before. It is the measurement of preference of all creatures to Allah.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“O you mankind, surely We created you of a male and a female, and We have made you races and tribes that you may get mutually acquainted. Surely the most honorable among you in the Providence of Allah are the most pious; surely Allah is Ever-Knowing, Ever-Cognizant.” (TMQ, 49:13).**

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“That (is the Command); and whoever (constantly) magnifies the waymarks of Allah, then surely it is of the piety of the hearts.” (TMQ, 22:32).**

Piety is a very high degree of faith and guidance where there is truthfulness of intention, faithfulness to Allah and righteous deeds. It includes avoiding every other belief or bad deed with which a man is unjust to himself and others. Piety keeps a man away from everything

¹²⁸ *Aza-Wa-Jal* [Glorified and Sublime be He].

that displeases Allah and attracts him to anything that Allah (*AWJ*) likes. A pious man thus is not found where Allah prohibited him and is there wherever Allah commanded him to be.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And (the ones) who have been guided (aright), (He) increases them in guidance and brings them their piety.”** (TMQ, 47:17).

Thus, piety is a fruit of guidance and increase of faith, and its degree with every believer is according to his status with Allah. Therefore, Allah (*SWT*) said, **“And (the ones) who have been guided (aright), (He) increases them in guidance and brings them their piety.”** (TMQ, 47:17).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, **“Have you seen in case he is upon guidance. Or he commands (people) to piety?”** (TMQ, 96:11-12).

Piety means prevention from hellfire. A believer makes his words and righteous deeds as a prevention to him from hellfire on the Day of Judgment. This requires knowing Allah and being fearful from Him and His punishment, and then learning about the Islamic law¹²⁹, what is lawful and what is not then applying it.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“So, in case you disbelieve, how will you protect yourselves against a Day that will make the- newborn hoary-headed?”** (TMQ, 73:17).

Piety is benignancy, and benignancy is piety. Benignancy is a collective word that includes all kinds of good deeds, thus piety is the same as doing good deeds.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“They ask you concerning the new moons (Literally: crescents). Say, “They are fixed times for mankind, and (for) the Pilgrimage.” And benignancy is not to come up to the homes from their backs; but benignancy is for man to be pious; and come up to the homes by their doors, and be pious towards Allah, so that possibly you would prosper.”** (TMQ, 2:189).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, **“And do not make Allah an object for your oaths (i.e., idle oaths) (as an excuse) against being benign and pious, and acting righteously (Or: reconciling) among mankind, and Allah is Ever-Hearing, Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ, 2:224).

Allah (*SWT*) also says, **“And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger and is apprehensive of Allah and is pious towards Him, then those are they (who are) the triumphant.”** (TMQ, 24:52).

The base of piety is belief in Allah, His messenger, His books, the judgment day, fate and destiny, obeying Allah and His Prophet. After that comes fear from Allah, then having piety in the heart of a man so he would become a winner.

Piety may be the reason for a righteous deed, if it comes before it, and may be related to the deed when it comes after. (Refer to the first *ayah*)

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“O Seeds (Or: sons) of Adam! In case ever there should definitely come up to you Messengers from among you, narrating to you My signs, so, whoever is pious and acts righteously, then no fear will be on them, nor will they grieve.”** (TMQ, 7:35).

¹²⁹ (Shar'a or *Shariah*) the ethical and moral code based on the Qur'an and sunnah.

(The second *ayah*) **“And you will never be able to do justice between (your) wives, (Literally: women) even if you are (so) eager; yet do not incline away completely (Literally: incline away all inclining) (from one), so that you leave her (behind) as if she were suspended. And in case you (do) righteousness and are pious (to Allah), then surely Allah has been Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” (TMQ, 4:129).**

In the first *ayah*, piety is the incentive for reconciliation and its reason, which is the lowest degree of piety. We can find many *ayahs* in the Qur’an in which Allah commands the believer to be pious to Allah and to do righteous deeds.

An example for that comes in what can be translated as, **“So be pious to Allah, and obey me, And do not obey the command of the extravagant.” (TMQ, 42:150-151).**

“O you who have believed, be pious to Allah, and speak befitting words. (Literally: say a befitting saying)” (TMQ, 33:70).

“So be pious to Allah as best as you can, (Literally: as much as you are able to) and give ear, and obey, and expend; (that is) most charitable (i.e., best) for yourselves. And whoever is protected against the avarice of his self, then those are they who are the prosperers.” (TMQ, 64:16).

In the second *ayah*, piety to Allah lies in the deed itself, which is reconciliation. So when the giving is more, so will be Allah’s forgiveness and mercy. This is the highest degree of piety and has many examples.

Allah (*SWT*) says about reconciliation, **“Surely the believers are only brothers; so make a reconciliation between your two brothers, and be pious to Allah, that possibly you would be granted mercy.” (TMQ, 49:10).**

The meaning intended is to be pious to Allah through reconciliation between the brothers.

Allah (*SWT*) says about patience, **“Indeed you will definitely be tried in your riches and your selves and indeed you will definitely hear much hurt from the ones to whom the Book was brought even before you, and from (the ones) who have associated; (i.e. have associated others with Allah) and in case you are patient and pious, then surely that is (an indication) of (true) resolve concerning His (i.e. the Commands of Allah) Commands.” (TMQ, 3:186).**

The meaning intended is to be pious to Allah by being patient.

Allah (*SWT*) says about doing fair deeds, **“And in case a woman fears non-compliance or veering away in her husband, then there is no fault in both of them if they make a righteous reconciliation between them; (Literally: that they reconcile a reconcile a reconciliation) and reconciliation is most charitable; and avarice is made ever present to selves (i.e., persons). And in case you do fair (deeds) and are pious (to Allah), then Allah has been Ever-Cognizant of whatever you do.” (TMQ, 4:128).**

The intended meaning is to be pious to Allah by doing fair deeds.

Allah (SWT) says about faith, **“In no way indeed will Allah leave out the believers in whatever (state) you are till He discriminates the wicked from good, and in no way indeed will Allah (allow you) to view the Unseen; but Allah selects out of His Messengers whom He decides. So believe in Allah and His Messengers, and in case you believe and are pious, then there will be for you a magnificent reward.”** (TMQ, 3:179).

The purpose is to be pious to Allah by being faithful, which shows that a believer should be pious to his lord through reconciliation, patience, benignancy, and faith. This is the piety that comes through doing righteous deeds, which is the highest degree of piety and it elevates the deeds to the level of benignancy, which in turn promotes piety to the level of benignancy.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely Allah is with the ones who have been pious and the ones who are fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 16:128).

Those people are pious to Allah by doing righteous deeds until they become among the ones who do their work fairly and meticulously.

Allah combined those two meanings and said, **“O you who have believed, be pious to Allah, and let (every) self look to what it has forwarded for the morrow, and be pious to Allah. Surely Allah is Ever-Cognizant of whatever you do.”** (TMQ, 59:18).

“So be pious to Allah,” (the first phrase) is an invitation to the believer to fear Allah and to look at what he has done and prepared for the Day of Judgment.

“And be pious to Allah” (the second phrase) means that the believer would be pious to Allah in all his deeds, repent, correct any bad deeds, and return unfairly taken things to whom deserve it, until he corrects his deeds and improves it. In addition, piety is necessary before, during, and after doing an act. Piety before the act is to correct the intention and make it sincere to Allah. Piety during the act is to make it a good deed to gratify Allah (AWJ). Piety after the act is to improve it, elaborate on it, and fine tune it, not spoil it. Piety to Allah is the only way to prosperity, for the pious are the prosperous.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Alif, Lam, Mīm. (These are the names of three letters from the Arabic alphabet, probably indicating that this inimitable Revelation, the Qur’an, is made of this Arabic alphabet. Only Allah Knows their meaning here). That is the Book, there is no suspicion about it, a guidance to the pious. Who believe in the Unseen, and keep up the prayer, and expend of what We have provided them, And who believe in what has been sent down to you, and what has been sent down (even) before you, and they constantly have certitude in the Hereafter. Those are upon guidance from their, and those are they who are the prosperers.”** (TMQ, 2:1-5).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“They ask you concerning the new moons (Literally: crescents). Say, “They are fixed times for mankind, and (for) the Pilgrimage.” And benignancy is not to come up to the homes from their backs; but benignancy is for man to be pious; and come up to the homes by their doors, and be pious towards Allah, so that possibly you would prosper.”** (TMQ, 2:189).

Qur’an discussed piety in many *ayahs* to let us know what it is. Following are some of the occurrences of piety in the Qur’an.

1. Piety is the gear of hearts and faith, without which the hearts would die, the spirits would get ill, blind and then die.

Allah (SWT) says, **“The Pilgrimage is (in) months well-known; so, whoever ordains (upon himself) the Pilgrimage in them, then there shall be no lying with (womenfolk), nor evident immorality, nor disputing in the Pilgrimage. And whatever charity you perform, Allah knows it. And sustain yourselves; so, the most charitable sustenance is piety; and be pious to Me, O (you) endowed with intellects!”** (TMQ, 2:197).

It is the best gear that a believer can prepare for his hereafter, and dedicate his life to gather until he meets Allah. Allah does not ask man or charge him to bring sustenance and spend his life gathering it. Instead, Allah commands him to focus on gathering his gear, which is the gear of the hereafter that lasts for good.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And command your (extended) family to (observe) the prayer and constantly (endure) patiently in it. We do not ask of you (any) provision. We, Ever We, provide you, and the end is to (the ones having) piety.”** (TMQ, 20:132)

2- Piety is a garment that a believer covers his heart with to protect it from torment of the Day of Judgment.

Allah (SWT) says, **“O Seed (Or: sons) of Adam! We have readily sent down on you a garment to overlay your shameful parts, and a vesture; (Fine clothes; or feathers) and the garment of piety, that is the most charitable; (i.e., better) that is of the signs of Allah, that possibly they would constantly remember.”** (TMQ, 7:26).

The *ayah* shows that this garment is better than the world’s garment that a man uses to cover up his private parts. A man needs the piety garment more than body garment, because bareness is bareness of the heart from faith, and the exposure of its ethics’ private parts. It is complementary to the body garment to fulfill virtue, cover, and beauty.

3- Forgiveness and justice and exaltation of Allah’s rituals of piety.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And in case you divorce them even before you have touched them, and you have already ordained for them a marriage-portion, (Literally: an ordinance) then (give her) one half of what you have ordained except (in case) the (women) remit, or he in whose hand is the knot of marriage remits; (and) that you remit is nearer to piety. And do not forget the (virtue of) grace among yourselves; surely Allah is Ever-Beholding of whatever you do.”** (TMQ, 2:237).

Allah (SWT) says, **“O you who have believed, be constantly upright for Allah, witnesses with equity, and let not antagonism of a people provoke you to not do justice. Do justice; that (Literally: it) is nearer to piety. And be pious to Allah, surely Allah is Ever-Cognizant of whatever you do.”** (TMQ, 5:8).

Allah (SWT) says, **“That (is the Command); and whoever (constantly) magnifies the waymarks of Allah, then surely it is of the piety of the hearts.”** (TMQ, 22:32).

4- The opposite of piety is impiety, vice and hostility

Allah (*SWT*) says, “**And (by) the self and That (i.e., The Command) which molded it, So He inspired it to its impiety and piety! He has already prospered who has cleansed it. And he has already been disappointed who stunts it.**” (TMQ, 91:7-10).

Allah (*SWT*) says, “**Or even shall We make the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness as the corruptors in the earth, or even shall We make the pious as the constantly impious?**” (TMQ 38:28).

Allah (*SWT*) says, “**O you who have believed, do not violate the way marks of Allah, nor the Inviolable Month, nor the offering, nor the garlands, nor the ones repairing to the Inviolable Home seeking from their Lord Grace and all-blessed Satisfaction; and when you are not on pilgrimage, (Literally: when you have become legally permissible, i.e., no longer in the sanctified state of a pilgrim) then (go game) hunting. And do not let antagonism of a people who barred you from the Inviolable Mosque provoke you to transgress. And help one another to benignancy and piety, and do not help one another to vice and hostility, and be pious to Allah; surely Allah is strict in punishment.**” (TMQ, 5:2).

The *ayah* shows the obligation of cooperating in benignancy and piety because the hand of Allah is with the group and the wolf only eats the straying sheep. The pious should cooperate with each other in good deeds and fight anyone who cooperates with the vice, hostility, corruption, and depravation.

Allah tests the piety of a believer in his heart:

Allah (*SWT*) says, “**Surely (the ones) who tone down their voices in the presence of the Messenger of Allah, those are they whose hearts Allah has tested for piety; they will have forgiveness and a magnificent reward.**” (TMQ, 49:3).

Therefore, a believer has to know that Allah will test his faith and piety to Him (*SWT*). So the believer should get ready for Allah’s trial that may be a loss in money, people, and fruits, and bliss will be to the patient ones.

5- Identifying Allah as the source of piety and the source of forgiveness

Allah (*SWT*) says, “**And in no way will they remember, except that Allah decides. He is The Source (Literally: The only Qualified One) of piety and The Source of forgiveness.**” (TMQ, 74:56).

This means that Allah (*AWJ*) deserves that people would be pious to him, because he is able to punish and the whole universe is in his hands. There is no refuge from Allah but to Him, thus Allah is the source of forgiveness as He is the source of punishment and is able to do it. Allah has the ability to pardon those who have sinned, and thus He (*AWJ*) is the source of piety and forgiveness.

6- Qur'an divided the pious ones into three categories:

a- The ones were are pious:

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely the ones who are pious, when a visitation of Ash-Shaytan (the all-vicious (one), i.e., the Devil) touches them, remind themselves, then, only then are they (clear) beholders.”** (TMQ, 7:201).

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely Allah is with the ones who have been pious and the ones who are fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 16:128).

Allah (SWT) says, **“And the ones who were pious to their Lord will be driven in hordes to the Garden till when they have come to it, and its gates will be opened, and its Keepers will say to them, “Peace be upon you! You have been good, so enter (into) it eternally (abiding).”“** (TMQ, 39:73).

Allah (SWT) says, **“But (the ones) who are pious to their Lord will have Gardens from beneath which Rivers run, eternally (abiding) therein, a hospitality from the Providence of Allah. And whatever is in the Providence of Allah is the most charitable for the benign.”** (TMQ, 3:198).

They are the ones who do *jihad* of their soul and succeed to be pious to Allah in some of their deeds more than the rest. They may be pious to Allah before the act, so they correct their intention and continue with the act, but Allah (AWJ) does not accept it for what it has of delinquency and carelessness. In addition, it would lack benignancy in a way that makes it displeasing to Allah, and Allah (AWJ) does not accept every good deed. For those believers who are doing *jihad* of their soul to do good deeds, Allah has promised them *jannah* (paradise) and His escort (AWJ). If they are affected by Satan's afflict, or got Satan's insinuations, they remember Allah, and protected their self from falling into what Allah has prohibited. They do *jihad* of their soul and advocate it as much as they can, following Allah's command of be pious to Allah as much as you can. So if the believer gets used to be pious to Allah, and is pious in all his deeds, he earns the attribute and becomes among the ones who are always pious in all their deeds and sayings, at good times and in bad times, with friend or enemy, and in what they like or hate.

b- The ones who are pious:

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“It is not benignancy that you turn your faces around in the direction of East and West; but benignancy is (in him) who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Prophets, and brings wealth in spite of his love for it (Or: offers out of love for Him) to near kinsmen, and the orphans, and the indigent, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and (to ransom) necks, (i.e. captives “slaves”) and keeps up the prayer, and bring the Zakat, (i.e. pay the poor-dues) and they who fulfill their covenant when they have covenanted, and the patient (ones) in misery and tribulation, and while in violence; (i.e. during fighting) those are (they) who act sincerely, and those are they who are the pious.”** (TMQ, 2:177).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“Alif, Lam, Mîm. (These are the names of three letters from the Arabic alphabet, probably indicating that this inimitable Revelation, the Qur'an, is made of this Arabic alphabet. Only Allah Knows their meaning here).That is the Book, there is no suspicion about it, a guidance to the pious. Who believe**

in the Unseen, and keep up the prayer, and expend of what We have provided them, And who believe in what has been sent down to you, and what has been sent down (even) before you, and they constantly have certitude in the Hereafter. Those are upon guidance from their, and those are they who are the prosperers.” (TMQ, 2:1-5).

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And vie swiftly with one another for forgiveness from your Lord and for a Garden whose breadth is the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious. Who expend in easiness and tribulation, and (are) the repressors of (their) rage, and are the clement towards (their) fellow-men; (Literally: mankind) and Allah loves the fair-doers. And who, when they (perform) an obscenity or do an injustice to themselves, remember Allah, and so they ask forgiveness for their guilty deeds- and who forgives guilty deeds except Allah (only)? - and who do not persist in the actions they performed, and they know (that).” (TMQ, 3:133-135).**

We can summarize the attributes of those who are pious from what was mentioned in the *ayahs* of the Qur’an as follows:

- 1- Believing in the unknown (Allah, Angels, Books, Messengers)
- 2- Believing in the last day to the extent of certainty; they are certain about the hereafter and that there is no doubt about it and they get prepared for it.
- 3- Spending from what Allah has given of knowledge, time, and mostly money, as they give *zakat* and more.
- 4- To give out money for the sake of Allah to the relatives, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, the beggars and in freeing slaves.
- 5- Keep up prayers
- 6- Being pious to Allah when they fulfill their promise and complete these promises and agreements until they are due.
- 7- Being patient in the good times and the hard times.
- 8- Being honest with people, especially an enemy, as long as he does not break an oath or compromise his honesty.
- 9- Truth, sincerity and a pure intention to Allah in every saying and doing.
- 10- Suppressing anger and forgiving and being benignant to people.

Those ten attributes are the attributes of pious people as Allah described them in the Qur’an.

These people are pious to Allah in every one of these attributes as much as they can and struggle for benigancy, may Allah (*AWJ*) let them reach the degree of those who are benignant.

Allah is aware of those who are pious, and is there to support, protect and advocate them. They have been pious to Allah, so they did good deeds and were pious to Allah in these deeds. They perfected their deeds until they were accepted by Allah.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And We have enjoined on man to show fairest (companionship) to his parents. His mother conceived him under compulsion, and she brought him forth under compulsion, and his pregnancy (i.e., the time he is in the womb) and his weaning are thirty months. Until, when he reaches full age, and reaches forty years, he says, “Lord! Dispense (to) me that I may thank (You) for Your favor wherewith You have favored me and my parents (both), and that I may do righteousness satisfying You, and make me righteous in my offspring. Surely I repent to You, and surely I am one of the Muslims.” (i.e., one who surrenders to Allah)” (TMQ, 46:15).**

Satisfactory deeds to Allah are the ones that are accepted by Him (*AWJ*) because a man who perfects his good deeds becomes among the pious.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And recite to them the tiding of the two sons of Adam with the truth as they offered a sacrifice, (Literally: sacrificed an all-sanctified sacrifice) (and) it was (graciously) accepted of one of them and not (graciously) accepted of the other. One (of them) said, “Indeed, I will definitely kill you.” (The other) said, “Surely Allah (graciously) accepts only of the pious.” (TMQ, 5:27).**

The pious do not just enter *jannah*, but Allah prepared it especially for them and named it “House of the Pious.”

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And vie swiftly with one another for forgiveness from your Lord and for a Garden whose breadth is the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious.” (TMQ, 3:133).**

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And it will be said to the ones who were pious, “What has your Lord sent down?” They will say, “Most Charitable!” (i.e., He has sent down the best) For the ones who do fair (deeds) in this present (life) (Literally: this lowly “life”, i.e., the life of this world) is a fair (reward), and, indeed, the Residence of the Hereafter is more charitable, and favorable indeed is the Residence of the pious! Gardens of Adn (Eden) they will enter, from beneath which rivers run, wherein they will have whatever they decide on. Thus Allah recompenses the pious.” (TMQ, 16:30-31).**

On The Day of Judgment, the pious ones meet Allah as a group and He (*AWJ*) brings *jannah* closer to them. So whoever was pious, is driven to the *jannah* and those who are pious get the *jannah* driven to them, and gets so close that they do not have to make any effort to get to it.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“On the Day We will muster the pious to The All-Merciful as a (welcome) deputation.” (TMQ, 19:85).**

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And the Garden will be drawn forward for the pious,” (TMQ, 26:90).**

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And the Garden will be drawn forward for the pious, without being afar.” (TMQ, 50:31).**

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And decorations. And, decidedly, as yet, this is only the enjoyment of the present life, and the Hereafter in the Providence of your Lord is for the pious.” (TMQ, 43:35).**

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“Close fellows upon that Day will be enemies to one another, (Literally: some of them to some (others) except the pious.” (TMQ, 43:67).**

The verses show that the *jannah* is not just for the pious, but the whole hereafter, starting with the revival, then the mustering, then the resurrection and then judgment of the pious. On the Day of Judgment, close ones are in disputes except for the pious. They are loving and happy with each other, as piety to Allah has brought them together in this world and for His love.

So their love continues in the hereafter. The Qur'an has described in details the bliss that the pious will find at *jannah*.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely the pious will be in (the midst of) Gardens and Springs, Taking whatever their Lord has brought them; surely, they were fair-doers before that.”** (TMQ, 51:15-16).

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely the pious will be in Gardens and Bliss, Jesting with what their Lord has brought them, and their Lord will protect them from the torment of Hell-Fire”** (TMQ, 52:17-18).

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely for the pious there is a place of triumph, Enclosed orchards, and vineyards,”** (TMQ, 78:31-32).

The Qur'an showed that Allah grants guidance of the Qur'an to the pious ones. Therefore, every time they read an *ayah*, it increases their faith and piety.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Alif, Lam, Mîm. (These are the names of three letters from the Arabic alphabet, probably indicating that this inimitable Revelation, the Qur'an, is made of this Arabic alphabet. Only Allah Knows their meaning here). That is the Book, there is no suspicion about it, a guidance to the pious.”** (TMQ, 2:1-2).

c- The most pious:

The true form of piety, the extreme case of piety, when the believer is pious to Allah (AWJ) in the true form of piety as we were commanded.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And how can you disbelieve, and the ayat (i.e., signs or verses) of Allah are recited to you, and His Messenger is among you? And whoever firmly adheres to Allah, then he is already guided to a straight Path. O you have believed, be pious to Allah with His true piety, and definitely do not die except as Muslims. And adhere firmly to the Rope (i.e. the Covenant of Allah=the Qur'an) of Allah, altogether, and do not be disunited; and remember the favor of Allah upon you as you were enemies, then He brought your hearts together, (Literally: joined “between”) so you have become brethren by His favor. And you were upon the brink of a hole of the Fire, so He rescued you from it. Thus Allah makes evident His signs to you, that possibly you would be guided. And let (i.e. there shall indeed be. the Arabic is emphatic) there be a nation of you (who) call to charity, and command beneficence, and forbid malfesance; and those are they (who are) the prosperers. And do not be as the ones who were disunited and differed (among themselves), even after the supreme evidences came to them. And those will have a tremendous torment.”** (TMQ, 3:101-105).

Then Allah said about making it easy, **“So be pious to Allah as best as you can, (Literally: as much as you are able to) and give ear, and obey, and expend; (that is) most charitable (i.e., best) for yourselves. And whoever is protected against the avarice of his self, then those are they who are the prosperers.”** (TMQ, 64:16).

We can notice that piety in its true form requires continuous effort from the believer until he meets Allah as a Muslim. He is not tempted by this life's charms and pleasures until the his death. These believers have not just settled to being pious, but they also acted to call people to piety and goodness. They call people to goodness and command them to do what Allah has commanded, and prohibit them from doing what Allah has prohibited. These are the callers to Allah with a prevision, and are the prosperous, as they have followed the Prophet (SAWS) well and therefore earned the love of Allah.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Say, “This is my way. I call to Allah with demonstration, I and whoever closely follows me; and All Extolment be to Allah; and in no way am I one of the associators.” (Those who associate other with Allah)” (TMQ, 12:108).**

This is the way of the prophets, scientists and the callers for Islam. They are the inheritors of the prophets and their followers.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Say, “in case you (really) love Allah, then closely follow me, (and) Allah will love you and forgive you your guilty (deeds); and Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.”“ (TMQ, 3:31).**

We can notice that the first responsibility of those callers and scientists is to unite the Muslims' word and gather them together and to teach their kin Muslims everywhere, and bring them together for the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it.”¹³⁰

Those callers are the best of the pious, righteous, rectifying ones. They are the light for others and for their societies. The *ayahs* warn us from differences and conflict which will bring their destruction and humiliation with Allah's torment on The Day of Judgment. Religion will be lost from between their hands, and thus they are not believers or pious. So after Allah mentioned the highest degrees of piety (extreme piety to Allah), He mentioned the biggest sins which is differences and conflict after what Allah has bestowed upon us of brotherhood and gathered us for His Qur'an and the best of His messengers, Muhammad (SAWS).

It is noticeable that all the attributes of those whom Allah loves were mentioned in plural form and not single (the benignant ones, the pious ones). This proves that the believer who is close to Allah lives in a group of Muslims and does not live stranded from them. He who does not care about the Muslims' issues, is not from them.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And (suffer) yourself to (endure) patiently with the ones who invoke their Lord in the early morning and nightfall, willing to seek His Face, and do not let your eyes go past them, (i.e., overlook them) willing (to gain) the adornment of the present life; (Literally: the lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) and do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, and who closely follows his own prejudices, and to whom the Command (i.e., the Command of Allah to him, or: his affair) has been all excess (i.e., He has been most disbelieving).” (TMQ, 18:28).**

¹³⁰ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book 61, number 545

The attributes of the most pious:

The “most pious” was mentioned in only one location in the Qur’an.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And which the most pious will soon be made to avoid- (He) who brings (forth) his wealth to cleanse himself. And in no way has anyone in his presence any favor to be recompensed, Except for seeking the Face of his Lord, The Most Exalted. And indeed he will eventually be satisfied.”** (TMQ, 92:17-21).

The leader of the pious ones is the one who came with the truth, he is the Prophet (SAWS). Then comes after him Abu-Bakr as-Sideeq (RA) who believed the Prophet (SAWS) in all what he came with from Allah (AWJ). Then come the attributes of the most pious, including all the attributes of piety. The most pious is the one who:

- 1- Spends his money and all what he owns on what Allah has commanded, even if he liked money so much.

Allah (SWT) says, **“You will never attain benignancy until you expend of whatever you love; and whatever thing you expend, then surely Allah is Ever-Knowing of it.”** (TMQ, 3:92).

Allah (SWT) says, **“And they give food (Literally: feed with food) for the love of Him, (Or: love of it) to the indigent, (and) the orphan, and the captive. “Surely we feed you only for the Face of Allah. We would not have any recompense from you, nor thankfulness. Surely we fear from our Lord a most frowning Day most inauspicious.” So, Allah has protected them from the evil of that Day and has granted (Literally: made them receive) them bloom and pleasure.”** (TMQ, 76:8-11).

- 2- Does *jihad* of his soul to advocate it and correct it, and spends a lot on *sadaqa* (a charitable deed) that purifies the soul and elevates it to higher degrees.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Take of their riches a donation to purify them and to cleanse them thereby; and pray for them; surely your prayer is serenity (i.e., tranquility) for them; and Allah is Ever-Hearing, Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ, 9:103).

- 3- Does every good deed for the sake of Allah alone, and seeks His pleasure and His Satisfaction. Therefore, if he gives away, he gives to Allah and if he loves, he loves for the sake of Allah.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “The most intermediate grip to faith is to love for the sake of Allah and hate for the sake of Allah.” (narrated by Ahmad)

The most pious are the ones who makes all their dealings for the sake of Allah rather than for the sake of people. Lady Aisha (RA) used to put musk on the money. When she was asked why, she said, “I knew that *sadaqa* is given in the hand of Allah before it is in the hands of the needy, so I preferred that it reaches the hands of Allah in its best form.”

Allah (SWT) says, **“Do they not know that Allah He, Ever He, accepts repentance from His bondmen, and He takes the donations; (i.e., Free will offering) and that Allah, He, Ever He, is The Superbly Relenting, The Ever-Merciful?”** (TMQ, 9:104).

We can thus conclude that the most pious live all their lives for the sake of Allah, and so their lives became mercy and bounty for all human kind, animals and plants, and everything else.

They do not keep anything to themselves with the Prophet (SAWS) being their good example, as the most pious and benignant.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Say, “Surely my prayer, and my rites, and my living, and my dying are for Allah, The Lord of the worlds.”“** (TMQ, 6:162).

This way we would have clarified the meaning of piety, and who are those who were pious, what are the attributes of those who are pious and the meaning of the most pious. May Allah (AWJ) grant us their love and then make us among them to win His love (AWJ). So, what is the way to become from among the pious?

What are the acts that take us to piety?

1- Worshipping Allah:

Allah (SWT) says, **“O you mankind, worship your Lord Who created you and the ones (that were) even before you, that possibly you would be pious;”** (TMQ, 2:21).

2- Following Allah’s book firmly; in saying and doing:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And (remember) as We took compact with you and raised above you the Tûr (i.e. the Mount): “Take powerfully what We have brought you and remember what is in it, that possibly you would be pious (towards Me).”“** (TMQ, 2:63).

3- Applying retaliation to preserve the sanctity of the blood, property, and honor between people:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And in retaliation there is life for you, O (men) endowed with intellects, that possibly you would be pious.”** (TMQ, 2:179).

4- Fasting

Allah (SWT) says, **“O you who have believed, prescribed for you is the Fast, as it was prescribed for (the ones) who were before you, that possibly you would be pious. (The fast is) (for) a prescribed number of days. So, whoever of you is sick or is on a journey, then a (fixed) number of other days; and against the ones who can afford it, there should be a ransom of food for an indigent man; (yet) whoever volunteers charitably, then it is most charitable on his part; and to fast is more charitable for you, in case you know.”** (TMQ, 2:183-184).

Some understood the phrase “would be pious for a prescribed number of days” to mean that the one who fasts is pious to Allah as long as he is fasting, but when he breaks his fast or the month of Ramadan is over piety would stop. They think that Allah commanded the believer to fast in Ramadan so they would be pious to Allah at least on those days.

5- Abiding by following the straight Path and no other path, as it is the only path to Islam:

Allah (SWT) says, **“And that this is My Path, a straight (one); so follow it closely and do not follow the (other) ways, or then they would make you part away from His way. That (Literally: those “rules”) is what He has enjoined you with, that possibly you would be pious.”**“ (TMQ, 6:153).

The straight path is Islam:

Allah (SWT) says, **“So, whomever Allah wills to guide, He expands his breast to Islam; and whomever He wills to lead into error, He makes his breast straitened, restricted, as if he were laboriously climbing up in the heaven. Thus Allah sets (Literally: makes) abomination upon (the ones) who do not believe. And this is the Path of your Lord, straight; We have already expounded the signs to a people who constantly remember.”** (TMQ, 6:125-126).

It is the only way leading to piety:

Allah (SWT) says, **“Say, “Bring forward your witnesses who bear witness that Allah has prohibited this.” So, in case they bear witness, (then) do not bear witness with them, and do not ever follow the prejudices of the ones who have cried lies to Our signs, and the ones who do not believe in the Hereafter, and they (unjustly) set up equals to their Lord. Say, “Come (so that) I may recite what your Lord has prohibited you: that you do not associate anything with Him, and to show fairest (companionship) to (your) parents; and do not kill your children (out) of want. We provide for you and for them too. And do not draw near obscenities (i.e., irregular sexual intercourse; shameful) whatever (of these) is outward and whatever inward; and do not kill the self that Allah has prohibited, except with the truth (i.e., by right, in the course of justice). That He has enjoined you with, that possibly you would consider. And do not draw near the wealth of the orphan, except in the fairest (manner), until he has reached full age. And fill up the measure and the balance with equity. We do not charge (any) self except to its capacity; and when you say (anything), then be just (i.e., do justice) even if he were a near kinsman. And fulfil the covenant of Allah. That is what He has enjoined you with, that possibly you would be mindful. And that this is My Path, a straight (one); so follow it closely and do not follow the (other) ways, or then they would make you part away from His way. That (Literally: those “rules”) is what He has enjoined you with, that possibly you would be pious.”**“ (TMQ, 6:150-153).

The verses show some of the Path’s features that should be followed in order to reach piety:

- 1- Not to worship anything with Allah
- 2- Being dutiful to one’s parents
- 3- Staying away from sins; the hidden ones and the obvious ones
- 4- Not to kill a soul that Allah has forbidden without certitude
- 5- Not to approach an orphan’s money except with what is better until he is strong enough (an adult) to take care of his money.
- 6- Being honest and equitable when weighing or balancing
- 7- Being just in what you say even if the adversary is a relative
- 8- Fulfilling Allah’s pledge

The verses show that in order for a believer to reach piety, he has to first make reason, then remember, then reach piety at the end.

The Equitable

Allah (AWJ) proved His love to the equitable ones in two places in the Qur'an.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Constant listeners to lies, constant eaters of illicit gain, so in case they come to you, then judge between them or veer away from them; and in case you veer away from them, then they will never harm you anything; and in case you judge, then judge with equity between them. Surely Allah loves the equitable.”** (TMQ, 5:42).

Allah (SWT) says, **“And in case two sections of the believers fight each other, then make a righteous (reconciliation) between them both; (Literally: act righteously between them) then in case one of them is inequitable to the other, then fight the one that is inequitable until it concedes to the Command of Allah. So in case it concedes, then make a reconciliation between them both with justice, and be equitable. Surely Allah loves the equitable (ones).”** (TMQ, 49:9).

The meaning of Equity:

The equitable is the one who makes a fair judgment, so that there is no injustice to any of the sides of the balance, and there would not be an oppressor and an oppressed. This way oppression would disappear from the life of people, thanks to the equitable.

The opposite of the equitable is the inequitable, the oppressor or the unjust.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And as for the inequitable, then they are firewood for Hell.”**¹³¹ (TMQ, 72:15).

We can understand the danger of oppression when we learn that Allah described it as contrary to Islam.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And that among us are the Muslims, and among us are the inequitable. So whoever have surrendered (to Allah), then those are they who earnestly sought rectitude.”** (TMQ, 72:14).

Therefore, a Muslim is not an oppressor or a witness to oppression, and Allah (AWJ) warned us from oppression.

The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Be on your guard against committing oppression, for oppression is a darkness on the Day of Resurrection”¹³¹

The Prophet (SAWS) said, that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said, “Verily I have made oppression unlawful for Me and for My servants too, so do not commit oppression.”¹³²

¹³¹ *Sahih Muslim, The Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining of the Ties of Relationship (Kitab Al-Birr was-Salat-I-wa'l-Adab) Chapter 13*

¹³² *Sahih Muslim, The Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining of the Ties of Relationship (Kitab Al-Birr was-Salat-I-wa'l-Adab) Chapter 13*

Among the names of Allah is The Equitable, or the one who judges with justice between His creations. Allah (*AWJ*) carries out equity, and judges his creations with equity and commands all humans to be equitable.

A good man once said that he passed by a man who was crucified by al-Hajjaj and said, “Oh Allah, Your patience on the oppressors harms the oppressed.” Then he had a dream that the Day of Judgment had come and he entered *jannah*, then he saw the oppressed at the very top of *jannah* at the best degree. He then heard a voice say, “My Patience on the oppressors placed the oppressed at the very top degrees of *jannah*.”

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“O you who have believed, be constantly upright with equity (with others), witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or (your) parents and nearest kin. In case (the person) is rich or poor, then Allah is the Best Patron for both. So do not ever follow prejudice, so as to do justice; and in case you twist or veer away, then surely Allah has been Ever-Cognizant of whatever you do.”** (TMQ, 4:135).

We can notice that the *ayahs* command us to be equitable and just even to ourselves and to the very closest people to our hearts. Our hate to an enemy should not make us oppress them or deviate from justice whether we are judging between people or acting as a witness to what they did. Justice and equity is the closest to Allah, as He is The Equitable, The Just, Who is patient on the oppressor but never forgets them.

Allah (*SWT*) says, **“And definitely do not reckon that Allah is heedless of what the unjust (ones) are doing; surely He only defers them to a Day (when) be holdings will glaze over. Hurrying with their heads protruding, their glances not returning towards them, and their heart-sights (as) air.”** (TMQ, 14:42-43).

Thus, Allah hears the *dua'a* (supplication) of the oppressed and elevates it above the seven heavens and calls, “By My Mightiness and My Majesty, I will give you victory even if after a while.”

The equitable and just person is the one who when judging between himself and someone else, he would oppress himself out of fear to oppress others in the least way. Yet, if he judges between people, he does not discriminate between old and young, poor and wealthy, strong or mighty and weak, loved ones or enemies, for there is no difference between any of those opponents until they are judged with equity.

Among the seven who Allah takes them under His Shade when there is no shade but His, is a fair leader. The scientists said that a leader is one who Allah chooses as a successor among ten other people, so he is just between them and is a fair leader; all of you are guardians and responsible for your charges.

The danger of holding back the truth or supporting the oppressed is the greatest danger of all. Allah (*AWJ*) helps a just kingdom and even if it is non-believing, and does not help an oppressing kingdom even if it is a Muslim one. Allah created the heavens and earth with justice, and if one of this world's balance panes is greater than the other, be sure that on the Day of Judgment it will be back to equity and justice.

Allah (SWT) says, **“And We will lay down the equitable scales for the Day of the Resurrection, so that not one self will be done an injustice in anything, and even in case it be the weight of one grain of mustard-seed, We will come up with it. And Sufficient are We for reckoners.”** (TMQ, 21:47).

Allah (SWT) also says, **“Today each self will be recompensed for what it has earned; (there is) no injustice today. Surely Allah is Swift at the reckoning.”** (TMQ, 40:17).

Thus, every oppression ends on the Day of Judgment and every right is returned to its owner, even an animal with no horns will take its right from an animal with horns. The non-believer does not enter hell until he believes that hellfire deserves him more than *jannah* and that he does not deserve more than hell. Then, he will not feel he is oppressed after Allah judges between him and His creatures, even with what he knows of the torment of hellfire.

Equity is what protects the unity of Muslims, like a safety valve. If an oppression takes place, those who are equitable will save the souls, blood and property of Muslims from getting lost in wars and conflicts, for as long as Allah knows. Only then the enemies of Muslims will take the fruit of wars and conflicts. The equitable reconcile between sides in conflict, and if one oppresses the other, they fight it until it is satisfied with the justice. Thus, the equitable will judge fairly so the souls will be satisfied and temptation will not exist.

Allah made for the blood, property and honor of Muslims a sanctity that cannot be crossed for any legal reason. Oppression is violation of blood, honor or property of another Muslim. Allah even prohibited the oppression of one to himself.

The equitable are the ones who protect property, honor and blood of people to live in peace. Without them, all houses are wasted and societies are damaged and man loses himself and corruption is everywhere on Earth.

Therefore, the equitable are the enemies of every oppressing leader who kills and tortures people for no reason at all.

Allah (SWT) says, **“Surely (the ones) who disbelieve in the signs of Allah, and kill the Prophets untruthfully, and kill the ones of mankind who command for equity, then give them the tidings (Literally: the good tidings) of a painful torment. Those are they whose deeds have been frustrated in the present (life) (Literally: the lowly life i.e., the life of this world) and the Hereafter, and in no way do they have any vindicators.”** (TMQ, 3:21-22).

It would be then that bringing the Prophets together with the equitable in these *ayahs* is to show the value of those who are equitable. It shows their importance in society and thus the danger of harming any of them. Allah (AWJ) commands every Muslim to be fair and equitable when weighing or balancing; i.e. not to be unjust.

Allah (SWT) says, **“So, whomever Allah wills to guide, He expands his breast to Islam; and whomever He wills to lead into error, He makes his breast straitened, restricted, as if he were laboriously climbing up in the heaven. Thus Allah sets (Literally: makes) abomination upon (the ones) who do not believe.”** (TMQ, 6:125).

Allah (SWT) says, “Say, “My Lord has commanded equity; and set your faces upright at every mosque and invoke Him, making the religion His faithfully; just as He began you, so you will go back (to Him).” (TMQ, 7:29).

Allah (SWT) says, “And keep up the weight with equity, and do not cause loss in the Balance.” (TMQ, 55:9).

Allah (SWT) says, “Indeed We have already sent Our Messengers with the supreme evidence (s), and We have sent down with them the Book and the Balance, that mankind may keep up equity. And We have sent down iron, wherein is strict violence, and (various) advantages for mankind, and that Allah may know who vindicates Him and His Messengers in the Unseen. Surely Allah is Ever-Powerful, Ever-Mighty.” (TMQ, 57:25).

Allah warned against cheating in the balance and not weighing unjustly. He named those who do that the stinters.

Allah (SWT) says, “And fill up the measure when you measure, and weigh with the straight equitableness; that is more charitable and fairest in interpretation (Or: determination, outcome).” (TMQ, 17:35).

On the Day of Judgment, Allah will place fair, just balances so that no soul is oppressed.

Allah (SWT) says, “And We will lay down the equitable scales for the Day of the Resurrection, so that not one self will be done an injustice in anything, and even in case it be the weight of one grain of mustard-seed, We will come up with it. And Sufficient are We for reckoners.” (TMQ, 21:47).

From what preceded, we can see that it is an obligation on every Muslim to judge between people or testify against them with equity as much as he can. He should seek Allah’s help and Allah’s name “The Equitable” and consult and make a choice. He would have no excuse at all to judge unjustly between people.

For the greatness of such a responsibility, Allah loves all the equitable. The equitable person applies justice at his house, through equity between his kids, and his wives like the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) used to do.

Group three: The characters of those love by Allah:

This group of believers includes six types of qualities that could be divided into two sections:

First section: Those who keep themselves pure – those who constantly purify themselves – those who constantly repent.

Second section: The patient – those who entrust their souls to Allah - those who fight for the sake of Allah as if they were a compact structure.

Allah has proven His love for those six types once for each one in his noble book.

The first section: The characteristics of purity:

This section includes all the characteristics of purity whether physical or spiritual. Those who keep themselves pure are those who like to be pure of any spiritual impurity or any sin that might soil their hearts.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Do not rise up (for prayer) therein at all. Indeed a mosque that was founded on piety from the first day is worthier for you to rise up therein; in it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves the ones who keep themselves pure.”** (TMQ, 9:108).

The amazing thing is that we can see how Allah proves his love to those who love to remain pure, which indicates the importance of purity in the life of individuals and societies. As a result one can never become a good believer if he is wearing dirty clothes or is dirty or living in a dirty place or if his manuscript of deeds is unclean from sins or bad deeds or if his heart is unclean filled with diseases. Purity should dominate Muslim societies and manifest itself as the main character of the society. The society's purity on the level of individuals and communities indicate that these communities are close to Allah (*AWJ*) and close to His law, because those who love to remain pure are loved by Allah and Allah loves them, therefore it is important to hasten in repentance and not stall, because those who love to remain pure can not stand to remain unclean in body without quickly cleaning it. The same when their hearts are desecrated by any sin they hasten to repent and seek Allah's forgiveness, they escape from Allah to Him and quickly repent without delaying it until their death just like many people when they say (Now I will repent) Allah will not forgive them.

When impurity covers the body and heart, then it becomes blind from all this blackness, after that one is distant from Allah and forgets Allah and Allah in return forgets about them until Allah makes them forget even about themselves.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Not at all! No indeed, (but) whatever they were earning has overlaid on their hearts.”** (TMQ, 83:14).

The Qur'an used the word purity in the moral sense when talking about Maryam (*AS*) "Mary" and hence the status of being elected became linked with purity.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And as the Angels said, “O Maryam, (Mary) surely Allah has elected you and purified you and has elected you over the women of the worlds.”** (TMQ, 03:42).

Also the Qur'an explained that giving out a *sadaqa* (a charitable deed) cleanses the heart. Allah says what can be translated as: **“Take of their riches a donation to purify them and to cleanse them thereby; and pray for them; surely your prayer is serenity (i.e., tranquility) for them; and Allah is Ever-Hearing, Ever-Knowing.”** (TMQ, 09:103).

Allah ordered the purification of the place and dress when He said to His Prophet Ibrahim (*AS*) (Abraham) to purify the sanctified house of Allah (al-Ka'ba) for those who circumambulate and pray. Allah said what can be translated as: **“And as We located for Ibrahim (The Magians) the place of the House (saying), “You shall not associate with Me anything; and purify My House for the circumambulators, and the upright ones, and (the ones) oft bowing down (and) prostrating themselves (in prayer).”** (TMQ, 22:26).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And so your clothes purify, And so defilement forsake!” (TMQ, 74:04,05).**

Allah also ordered that no one should touch his noble book other than those who purify themselves and those who love to remain pure. Allah says what can be translated as: **“In a nestled Book, Which none shall touch except the purified,” (TMQ, 56:78,79).**

Those who constantly purify themselves and those who constantly repent:

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And they ask you concerning menstruation. Say, “It is hurt; so keep apart from women during menstruation, and do not draw near them till they are pure. So, when they have purified themselves, then come up to them (i.e., to have sexual intercourse) from where Allah has commanded you.” Surely Allah loves the ones constantly repenting, and He loves the ones constantly purifying themselves.” (TMQ, 02:222).**

The *ayah* addresses the issue of the menstruation period and explains that when this period ends the blood represents a sensory type of impurity, because the woman at this point is clean but she needs to purify herself by washing before her husband approaches her. Allah then proved his love to those who constantly purify themselves and those who constantly repent. This is the only *ayah* in the noble Qur’an that links those two qualities that Allah loves by repeating the verb (loves) without repeating the word (Allah).

This proves that there is a hidden relation between physical purity and moral purity. The menstruation period is a physical impurity, so one would expect the attribute of (those who constantly purify themselves) to come before the attribute of (those who constantly repent), because the topic does not address sins and wrong doings but address a physical impurity. This explains that when a woman washes herself after the end of her period it is not only a physical purity but it is just like any other cleansing that washes the body from all the dirt and the soul of all the sins.

Washing and ablution is not only for the sake of physical purity but it is also for the purity of the heart and soul from the impurity of the sins.

This is why washing without the use of water or “*Tayamum*” (dry ablution) was allowed in case of the lack of water. The same reason why one wipes the top of the leather slippers instead of the bottom and also the reason why an ablution on top of another increases the purity of the spirit removing with each drop of water every sin that the one performing the ablution committed with his hand, tongue, eyes or legs.

Allah’s Prophet said : “He who performs the ablution and performs it well and then says “There is no god but Allah, He is One and there is no associate with Him, that Muhammad is His servant and His messenger Oh Allah make me one of those who constantly repent and those who constantly purify themselves” Allah will allow he who affirms these truths enter Paradise through any one of its eight doors.” Narrated by at-Tirmidhy.

And so we understand the wisdom of combining those two qualities with each other and putting forward those who constantly repent instead of those who constantly purify themselves. It is not the blindness of the sight, but the blindness of the hearts. When the hearts become pure of all the sins by repenting, this is far more important than the physical purity of

the impure sensual flesh, which is why purity is part of the faith. Whoever wants his heart to remain clean and pure of any sin or disease, then he should be keen on cleaning his body and maintaining it clean and pure and well scented.

The Superbly Relenting:

It is one of the most beautiful names of Allah and the meaning of repentance is to return to Allah and returning to Allah this return is after the distance caused by the sin. The bases for this repentance are:

1. Regretting the performing of this sin
2. Refraining from it
3. Deciding to never return to this sin again, just as much as one hates to be thrown in hell
4. Amending the injustice caused to others

Repentance is based on remorse, so if the disobedient regretted ever doing this sin then he should rejoice because Allah will forgive him and accept his repentance. Allah says what can be translated as: **“And to the three who were left staying behind, until, when the earth, spacious as it is, became strait for them, and their selves became strait for them, and they expected that there was no shelter from Allah except in Him; thereafter He relented towards them that they might repent; surely Allah, He, Ever He, is The Superbly Relenting, The Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 09:118).

Whoever commits a sin and repents to The Superbly Relenting will be accepted and if he committed another sin and returned to Him, he will welcome him back, if he then made a mistake and repented and continued to do so the repenting servant of Allah will forgive him. Allah knows that every human being is prone to committing sins. Allah stated that the best sinners are those who repent quickly to Allah after every sin without delaying it until the time of their death when they say: O Allah let me return, I might do better. Allah is the one who accept the repentance of His servants and forgives their sins and He ordered us to repent. Allah says what can be translated as: **“And say to the female believers to cast down their be holdings, and preserve their private parts, and not display their adornment except such as is outward, and let them fix (Literally: strike) closely their veils over their bosoms, and not display their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands’ fathers, or their sons, or their husbands’ sons, or their brothers, or their brothers’s sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their women, or what their right hands possess, or (male) followers, men without desire (Literally: without being endowed with “sexual” desire) or young children who have not yet attained knowledge of women’s privacies, and they should not strike their legs (i.e., stamp their feet) so that whatever adornment they hide may be known. And repent to Allah altogether, (O) you believers, that possibly you would prosper.”** (TMQ, 24:31).

And the Prophet (SAWS) used to ask for Allah’s forgiveness one hundred times a day. When asking for Allah's forgiveness it always ends with a true repentance. Allah says what can be translated as: **“O you who have believed, repent to Allah in honest repentance; it may be that your Lord will expiate for you your ill deeds and will cause you to enter Gardens from beneath which rivers run, on a Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and the ones who believed with him. Their light will be proceeding along before (Literally: between their hands) them and on their right (hands), (and) they say, “Our Lord, perfect for us our light and forgive us; surely You are Ever-Determiner over everything.”** “ (TMQ, 66:08).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“So extol with the praise of your Lord, and ask Him forgiveness; surely He has (always) been Superbly Relenting.”** (TMQ, 110:03).

Out of Allah’s mercy He made the angels ask for the forgiveness of those who repented to Allah. Allah says what can be translated as: **“The ones who bear the Throne, and the ones around it, extol with the praise (s) of their Lord and believe in Him, and they ask forgiveness for the ones who have believed, “Our Lord, You embrace everything in mercy and knowledge; so forgive the ones who repent and closely follow Your way, and protect them from the torment of Hell Fire. Our Lord, and make them enter the Gardens of Adn (Eden) which You have promised them and the ones who were righteous of their fathers, and their spouses, and their off springs; surely You, Ever You, are The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise.”** (TMQ, 40:07,08).

Allah (AWJ) told us that the door for repentance never closes whether day or night. Allah’s Prophet says: “Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, Stretches out His Hand during the night so that the people repent for the fault committed from dawn till dusk and He stretches out His Hand during the day so that the people may reprint for the fault committed from dusk to dawn. (He would accept repentance) before the sun rises in the west (before the Day of Resurrection). Narrated by Muslim.

Allah is The Superbly Relenting, He is the one who accepts the return and remorse of sinners no matter how many times his sin was repeated, Allah will forgive him as long as he is honest about his repentance. The superbly relenting is a person who sins a lot but repents to Allah who in turn loves him because he is so keen on always returning back to the straight path.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“He has legislated for you as the religion what He enjoined on Nûh, (Noah) and that which We have revealed to you, (The Prophet) and what We have enjoined on Ibrahîm and Mûsa and Isa (Abraham, Moses and Jesus, respectively) (saying), “Keep up the religion and do not be disunited therein.” Greatly (detested) to the associators (i.e., those who associate others with Allah) is that to which you call them. Allah selects to Himself whomever He decides and guides to Himself whomever turns penitent.”** (TMQ, 42:13).

Allah is The Ever-Affectionate, The Gentle, The Ever-Forbearing on His creations, so if they made a mistake he will forgive the sin and accept their repentance, as he is The Ever-Compassionate, The Effacer of sins, The Ever-Forgiving, The Superb Forgiver, The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. No one forgive the sins but Him no matter how many they are, they will never be greater than His mercy when they sin and He waits for them to return to Him, if they returned He will be happy with them and forgives them and turns their sins into good deeds. Let us remember the first one who repented, which was Adam (AS) so he revealed to them the words of repentance. Allah says what can be translated as: **“They both said, “Our Lord, we have done an injustice to ourselves; and in case You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, indeed we (both) will definitely be among the losers.”** “ (TMQ, 07:23).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Then Adam received (some) Words from his Lord; so He relented towards him; surely He, Ever He, is The Superbly Relenting, The Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 02:37).

Repentance must be followed by correction if that sin caused an injustice to someone and it must be followed by a good deed if it caused an injustice to oneself.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Yet whoever repents, even after his injustice, and acts righteously, then surely Allah relents towards (i.e. accepts his repentance) him; surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” (TMQ, 05:39).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Except him who repents and believes and does righteousness; so those will enter the Garden and they will not be done injustice in anything.” (TMQ: 19:60).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Except him who repents, and believes, and does righteous deed (s). So those, Allah will turn (Or: substitute fair deeds in place of odious ones) their odious (deeds) into fair (deeds); and Allah has been Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” (TMQ, 25:70).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“So, as for him who repents, and believes, and does righteousness, then he may be among the prosperers.” (TMQ, 28:67).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And the ones who do odious deeds, thereafter repent even after that and believe, surely even after that your Lord is indeed Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful..” (TMQ, 07:153).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And whoever repents and does righteousness, then surely he repents to Allah a (true) repenting.” (TMQ, 25:71).**

Repentance is returning to Allah’s the straight path and remaining on it and trying one’s best effort to remain on it without committing a new sin similar or same to the first one. That is why the angels pray for those who repented and followed Allah’s path and declared their Islam as a fresh start with Allah.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“The ones who bear the Throne, and the ones around it, extol with the praise (s) of their Lord and believe in Him, and they ask forgiveness for the ones who have believed, “Our Lord, You embrace everything in mercy and knowledge; so forgive the ones who repent and closely follow Your way, and protect them from the torment of Hell Fire.” (TMQ, 40:07).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And We have enjoined on man to show fairest (companionship) to his parents. His mother conceived him under compulsion, and she brought him forth under compulsion, and his pregnancy (i.e., the time he is in the womb) and his weaning are thirty months. Until, when he reaches full age, and reaches forty years, he says, “Lord! Dispense (to) me that I may thank (You) for Your favor wherewith You have favored me and my parents (both), and that I may do righteousness satisfying You, and make me righteous in my offspring. Surely I repent to You, and surely I am one of the Muslims.” (i.e., one who surrenders to Allah)” (TMQ, 46:15).**

Repentance is the best thing to do and it is a thing that the sinner’s heart has reformed and purified, as for those who did not repent they are wrongdoers.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And an announcement from Allah and His Messenger to mankind on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage that Allah is quit of the associators and (so is) His Messenger. So in case you repent, then it is more charitable (i.e., better) for you; and in case you turn away, then know that you are unable to be defiant to Allah; and give tidings to the ones who have disbelieved of a painful torment.” (TMQ, 09:03).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“They swear by Allah that in no way did they say (anything wrong), and they did indeed already say the word of disbelief, and disbelieved after their (acceptance of Islam; and they designed what they did not attain and in no way did they seek vengeance except that Allah enriched them, and His Messenger, of His Grace; so, in case they repent, it will be more charitable (i.e., better) for them; and in case they turn back Allah will torment them with a painful torment in the present (life) (Literally: the lowly (life), the life of this world) and the Hereafter; and in no way do they have in the earth a constant patron or a ready vindicator.” (TMQ, 09:74).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“In case you two repent to Allah, then your hearts are readily attentive; and in case you two back one another against him, then surely Allah, Ever He, is his Patronizer, and Jibrîl, (Angel Gabriel) and the righteous (among) the believers, and, after that, the Angels are (his) backers.” (TMQ, 66:04).**

Allah wants us to repent and accepts it from those who quickly turn to Him. Allah says what can be translated as: **“Surely relenting from (Literally: upon, i.e.’ Allah relents) Allah is only towards the ones who do any odious deed in ignorance (and) thereafter they repent shortly; so Allah relents towards those and Allah has been Ever-Knowing, Ever-Wise. And relenting is not for the ones who do odious deeds until, when death is present to one of them, he says, “Surely now I repent, “ neither (for) the ones who die (while) they are steadfast disbelievers; for those We have readied a painful torment. “ (TMQ, 04:17,18).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And Allah wills to relent towards you, and (the ones) who closely follow (their) lusts would have you incline (Literally: tilt away a tremendous tilting) away a tremendous inclining.” (TMQ, 04:27).**

Allah’s Prophet says: “When a servant of Allah commits a sin then purifies himself well, prays two *Raka’a* (one unit of Islamic prayer) then asks Allah’s for forgiveness, Allah will forgive him” Narrated by Abu Dawood.

And read what Allah said and can be translated as: **“And whoever earns an odious (deed) or does an injustice to himself (and) thereafter asks Allah His forgiveness, he will find Allah Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” (TMQ, 04:110).**

Asking for Allah’s forgiveness after committing a sin must come right before a true and honest repentance to Allah. Allah says what can be translated as: **“And (saying), “Ask forgiveness of your Lord, thereafter repent to Him, (and) He will make you to enjoy fair enjoyment to a stated term and He will bring of His Grace to everybody owning grace. And in case they turn away, then surely I fear for you the torment of a Great Day.” (TMQ, 11:03).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And ask forgiveness of your Lord, thereafter repent to Him; surely my Lord is Ever-Merciful, Ever-Affectionate.” “ (TMQ, 11:90).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“O you who have believed, repent to Allah in honest repentance; it may be that your Lord will expiate for you your ill deeds and will cause you to enter Gardens from beneath which rivers run, on a Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and the ones who believed with him. Their light will be proceeding along before (Literally: between their hands) them and on their right (hands), (and) they say, “Our Lord, perfect for us our light and forgive us; surely You are Ever-Determiner over everything.” “ (TMQ, 66:08).**

After what was mentioned above we realize the important of purity and how it should be the basis of our lives, in order for us to become one of those who love purity and hence become of those who constantly purify themselves. We must then do our best effort to remain clean in body and cloths, as well as where we are and perform the ablution and repeat it as it brightens the soul more and more with each time, as Allah removes with it our sins and mistakes before cleaning our bodies from dirt or impurities.

The second section: (Those who entrust their souls to Allah – The patient – Those who fight for the sake of Allah as if they were a compact structure)

This second section of the characteristics mentioned by Allah one time in the noble Qur’an, proving each time His love to them complements the part handling the characteristics of purity, such as those who keep themselves pure, those who constantly purify themselves and those who constantly repent. This explains a certain method of dealing with sins and deviating from the straight path and stressing on the importance of hastening in returning to it once again without any delays, as well as quickly removing any impurity that comes to the heart or body. These are the qualities of those loved by Allah (*AWJ*).

But as humans one deals in this life and while walking on Allah’s straight path with a lot of mixed situations. Each Muslim makes a different choice than his fellow Muslim, but Allah (*AWJ*) chooses for us a certain attitude and way of thinking to use for each of those situations, so if we selected Allah’s choice then we would win His love.

Three choices for those who seek His love:

Muslims should have a message and seek to achieve the goal of serving Allah’s religion, offering in the process their money and selves and buying with the price Allah’s love (*AWJ*). This message is the message of mercy and giving to all mankind and all human societies around the globe, as a Muslim is constructive and strives sincerely side by side with his fellow believers as if they were a compact structure gathered on the book of Allah (*AWJ*) and the *sunnah* of his Prophet Muhammad (*SAWS*). They don’t care about their suffering or what happens to them for the sake of Allah while fighting Satan who tries to split them apart in unity or in word.

They struggle (*jihad*) with money, oneself and anything else even lives given for the sake of Allah, is complete devotion to Allah and is aimed at Allah alone, as they are for the sake of Allah and heading for the path of Allah, not the worldly path, money or status. That is why they are like a compact structure standing side by side facing the *qiblah*, filling their hearts with remembrance of Allah, without leaving any gaps between them to allow the devil to separate them through enmity, hatred or division, similar to a compact brick construction of blocks each attached to the other molded by cement and joined together as a single mold.

This union is the union of love to Allah. Each of those who fight for His sake feel the responsibility of upholding this link with his fellow believer, as well as the responsibility of working together to maintain this bond and love among his fellow believers.

That is why the first thing Allah's Prophet (SAWS) did when he founded the first Islamic society on earth was to build a mosque and join in brotherhood the migrants and supporters, until they even shared the house and money and their hearts became one.

One of the seven types of people, who will be sheltered under the shadow of Allah's thrown on the day when there will be no shadow but His, are two men who loved Allah and met for His sake and departed for His sake. It is the closest bond of faith, loving what Allah loves and hating what He hates.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Surely Allah loves the ones who fight in His way in rank (s) as if they were a compact structure.” (TMQ, 61:04)**

And so the *ayah* explains that Allah loves those who honestly offer their souls and money for His sake and live their lives in the service of Allah's religion and the victory of his weak fellow believers, even if it reaches fighting until death for His sake. This way they are unified in their love to Allah standing next to each other like a compact structure, just like they way they stand in prayer, like bricks of a compact structure. They don't leave the slightest chance for the devil to separate between them, standing shoulder next to shoulder and foot next to foot their hearts and souls unified. Their aim is Allah and their light is the Qur'an and their role model is their Prophet (SAWS) forsaking everything and gaining Allah's love (AWJ) and reward.

Jihad for the sake of Allah is not restricted to the fight of the bodies, but includes fighting off the disbelieving souls and fighting any temptation that might distort one from Allah's path, fighting any tyrant or Satan, fighting anyone who corrupted or caused injustice.

Also the battle field is not restricted to the military battle field, but includes every site, newspaper or any other place where someone is disobeying Allah or mocking Allah's book and His Prophet's (SAWS) *sunnah*. The weapons are not only tanks, plans or other weapons but it can vary and diversify depending on the type of combat. Some of the most important types of weapons are science, wisdom, faith, unity, understanding, enlightened mind, money and power. Ever person has a role in this world to serve Allah's religion and each person knows his edge that will open a door to Allah just like the many doors that lead to heaven on Judgment Day.

The believer must remember that Allah created him on this earth to be His successor to repair what has been corrupted and keep what is good, to rectify what is right and stop any injustice, bringing victory to the oppressed and helping the weak in their need, aiding the needy and paying their dept. He must restore the kinship ties, give to others and put them ahead of himself, spending and giving away from what he holds dear, ordering others to do good and preventing them from the wrong, judging between them by Allah's book and His Prophet's *sunnah* (SAWS) spreading Allah's words of light among His creation all over the globe. He must do all this while remaining unified with his fellow believers, this way they would be truly a blessing from Allah, just like our beloved Prophet Mohammed (SAWS). Let us be always prepared to fight for the sake of Allah offering our souls to our creator (AWJ) because one dies only once, so let it be for the sake of Allah.

Allah's Prophet says: "Whoever dies without having striven for the cause of Allah or having had the intention of doing so, has died following one of the branches of hypocrisy." (Reported by Muslim)

Allah says what can be translated as: **"And the ones who have striven in (our way), (Literally: in us) indeed We will definitely guide them to Our ways; and surely Allah is indeed with the fair-doers."** (TMQ, 29:69).

First: Those who entrust their souls to Allah

One becomes a true believer when he asks Allah's aid in everything he does or thinks about, by applying the following steps, this way one can truly become one of those who entrust their souls to Allah and not one of the complacent:

- To think about the nature of the matter coming your way, whether it is prohibited or undesirable, obligatory or mentioned in the *sunnah* or recommended and if it is permitted then one should consult and ask Allah's permission.
- If that matter is recommended, obligatory or mentioned in the *sunnah* then learn how Allah wants you to do it and learn from Allah's beloved creation Mohammed (SAWS) choosing the best time, method and company to perform this obedience, in order to gain Allah's acceptance. If the matter is permitted, then one must ask and consult those with experience, trust and specialization, then pray two rak'as *Istekharah*, which is the prayer for guidance (to the right decision) asking Him (AWJ) to guide him to what is best in this life and the hereafter, as Allah knows what you don't know.
- After the preparation for the action intended, comes the execution to the best possible ability, as the believer must intend to start the action while Allah is his guider, that is why he should start the action by saying the *bismillah* (In the name of Allah, The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful) and choosing one of Allah's most beautiful names that commensurate with the act, while renewing his faith in this action and performing it exclusively for the sake of Allah, seeking only the legitimate reasons and leaving the result for Allah's choice (AWJ).

Praying sincerely to Allah and seeking the legitimate reasons with all the means of proficiency and devotion, while leaving the results in Allah's hands is the key to entrusting one's soul to Allah. One then should accept the outcome of the action as long as one did the best effort and sought Allah's guidance and if he was successful then it was because Allah made him so. On the other hand if he was not successful then one must say (This is the will of Allah) while being certain that Allah (AWJ) chose what is best, as it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you; and Allah knows and you do not know. The believer must not forget to thank Allah for his success with any deed by prostrating in thanks for Him.

Allah says what can be translated as: **"O you who have believed, do not be as the ones who have disbelieved and have said to their brethren when they strike in the earth (i.e. journey in the land) or are upon expeditions, "If they had been in our presence, they would not have died and not been killed." that (is so that) Allah may make that a regret in their hearts. And Allah gives life and makes to die, and Allah is Ever-Beholding of whatever you do. And indeed in case you are killed in the way of Allah or die, indeed**

forgiveness from Allah and mercy are more charitable than whatever they (heap) together. And indeed in case you die or are killed, indeed to Allah you will be mustered. So it was by (some) mercy from Allah that you have been lenient with them; and if you had been stern (and) harsh of heart, they would indeed have broken away from round about you. So be clement towards them, and ask forgiveness for them, and take counsel of them in the command. Yet when you are resolved, then put your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves the (ones) trusting (in Him). In case Allah grants you victory, then none can overcome you, (Literally: none can be your over comer) and in case He abandons you, who then can give you victory after Him? And in (Literally: on) Allah let the believers put their trust.” (TMQ, 03:156-160).

We note that the *ayat* address the issue of fighting for the sake of Allah and how to prepare for it then entrusting one’s soul to Allah and this is the only place in the Qur’an which proves Allah’s love for those who entrust their souls to Allah. This is the type of entrusting that Allah loves.

If a believer becomes accustomed to entrusting his soul to Allah concerning everything, then getting ready to meet the disbelievers should be one of the first things about entrusting one’s soul to Allah, as it is the most difficult for the soul to do, since life ends with the blow of the swords in the heat of the battle.

The *ayat* begin to teach the believers that every person has a fixed life time and it will not be delayed an hour or be accelerated by the outbreak of the battle. It will not cease by running away from the battle and will not linger, but when one dies for the sake of Allah it is then a mercy from Allah, better than what people gather all their lives in this world, as everyone will return to Allah after his death and be resurrected on the Day of Judgment.

The *ayat* then talk about the Prophet (SAWS), who was merciful, lenient and tender hearted with the believers that is why they loved him and gathered around him, this is how a leader, teacher and parent must be. The *ayat* kept telling the Prophet (SAWS) to pardon the believers past ignorance, to ask for Allah’s forgiveness for them and to consult with them if he needed to go into battle until it becomes their choice, so if they agreed and prepared to fight, then they should entrust their souls to Allah and step forward while being confident that victory will come. That is why entrusting their souls to Allah is necessary and to Allah alone, as they will not become victorious because of their weapons, number, wisdom or any other reason, because victory is a blessing that is owned by Allah (AWJ) alone giving it without reasons to the believer’s hearts, as long as their intentions are true and they prepared themselves for it. One should only rely on Allah and entrust one’s soul to Allah without any delay, as He alone can grant them victory and without His they could never achieve it even if the world’s armies gathered together.

Allah’s name The Ultimate Trustee

Those who entrust their souls to Allah understand the true meaning of the word, as one should not prepare oneself or worship the causes and forget Allah who created everything. Omar (RA) stated that the Prophet (SAWS) said: “If you would entrust your souls to Allah as you should, then He will provide your sustenance just like He does with birds that fly our empty and return with full bellies”. Narrated by at-Tirmidhy.

The heart of the believer is like a vessel, it contains the needed amount of entrusting one’s soul to Allah in order for him to seek his sustenance and Allah will then provide it to him, just

like the birds that fly out hungry not knowing where to turn to or where her food lies but when they return their bellies would be filled as The Superb Provider would have fed them. The best example for this is Lady Maryam (AS), as every time Zakariya (AS) (Zechariah) entered her Chamber, he found provision in her presence. He asked her how this came to her and she told him that it is from the Providence of Allah; surely Allah provides whomever He decides without reckoning. Here we find that Lady Maryam's heart is filled with faith, entrusting one's soul in Allah and the true complete surrendering to Allah, this is why she did not need a cause for sustenance. This is the place of prophets and those close to Allah, but when she was given the good tidings for the birth of her son, she wondered how could she bear a child when no mortal has touched her, but it is the trust in Allah and surrendering oneself to Him. We notice here that the Qur'an proved that she was ordered to shake the palm tree after the birth of Isa (AS), so that the dates would fall upon her to eat and nurture her.

So entrusting one's soul to Allah requires prayer, searching for the causes and accepting the matter and its results for the sake of Allah (AWJ), for Him to choose and then accept what He chose without worrying about what the destiny may bring. Whatever happens to a believer is always good, which will happen to no one but a believer.

Allah's Prophet says: "How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for his affairs are all good, and that does not apply for anyone except the believer. If something good happens to him, he gives thanks, and that is good for him; if something bad happens to him he bears it with patience, and that is good for him". Narrated by Muslim.

Understanding the name "The Ultimate Trustee" is very important for the sake of understanding the true and complete meaning of entrusting one's soul to Allah. The Ultimate Trustee is the one we rely on for all affairs and we perform them for Allah (AWJ), as he is sufficient for whoever relies on Him, because whoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will be reckoned for him. Surely he is enough as The Ultimate Trustee.

Allah is the one who owns all the criteria of The Ultimate Trustee, because He is The Ever-Living that never dies, The Superb Upright Sustainer, slumber does not overtake Him, nor sleep; The Almighty, The Ever-Merciful who sees you when you rise. In no way can there will be a private conference among two persons, except that Allah is the third of them, nor three except that He is the fourth of them surely Allah is Ever-Knowing and Ever-Witnessing of everything. Nothing escapes His knowledge, not an atom in the skies or earths, as He is Allah (AWJ) and there is no God but Allah, The Sovereign, The Most Holy, The Omnipotent, The Supreme Determiner, The Creator, The Initiator, The Supreme Fashioner. He is the creator of everything and His word will be fulfilled, but most people don't know that He is in the skies and earths.

Entrusting one's soul to Allah is to delegate the matter to Allah and this does not happen unless the following five qualities exist:

1. To be knowledgeable and Allah knows everything.
2. To be able and Allah is capable of everything.
3. To be merciful and Allah's mercy included everything out of His wisdom.
4. To guide others and Allah guides to the straight path.
5. To be alive, never dies, never sleeps or be taken by slumber and He is The Superb Upright Sustainer, slumber does not overtake Him, nor sleep.

Allah's messenger described seventy thousand of those who will enter paradise without being judged.

Allah's Prophet says: "They are those who did not recite *ruqyah* (incantation) nor ask for *ruqyah* to be done, and they did not believe in bad omens and they put their trust in their Lord". Narrated by Muslim.

It was narrated by Bukhary from Ibn Abbas (RA) that (Allah suffices me, for He is the best disposer of affairs) was said by Ibrahim (AS) when he was thrown in the fire and also by our master Muhammad (SAWS) when they told him that the multitude have gathered against them so be apprehensive, yet it increased them in belief, and they said "Allah is The Reckoner enough for us".

It was narrated that Anas ibn Maalik (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: "Whoever says – when leaving his house In the name of Allah, I put my trust in Allah, there is no power and no strength except with Allah, it will be said to him: You are taken care of and you are protected, and the Shaytan will keep away from him." Narrated by Abu Dawood, 5095; al-Tirmidhi, 3426; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Entrusting one's soul to Allah is when the heart relies on Allah (AWJ) without forgetting about the causes. Allah ordered the believer to remain true and entrust their souls to Allah. Allah says what can be translated as: **"Said two men of the ones that feared Allah) (and) whom Allah had favored, "Enter in upon them (by) the gate. So, when you enter it, then surely you will be overcoming them. And so put all your trust in Allah in case you are believers." (TMQ, 05:23).**

That is why entrusting one's soul to Allah is half of the religion and leaving all to Allah is the other half, as religion is asking for Allah's aid and worshiping Him. Entrusting one's soul is asking for Allah's aid and leaving all to Allah is worshiping Allah.

Allah says what can be translated as: **"And in whatever things you differ about, then the judgment thereof belongs to Allah. "That is Allah, my Lord; in Him I have put my trust, and to Him I turn penitent"."** (TMQ, 42:10).

And Allah says in the first *surah* of His book what can be translated as: **"You only do we worship, and You only do we beseech for help."** (TMQ, 01:05).

That is why a believer should not forget about entrusting his soul to Allah and focus only on his work and ability while forgetting Allah's ability and knowledge, because leaving this factor is abandoning one's faith, as it is the core of faith. (And so put all your trust in Allah in case you are believers).

The heart of those who entrust their souls to Allah must be filled with tranquility as they have turned over the matter to Allah and relied on Him. Allah is sufficient and better than any other being, what will you find if you loose Allah and what will you loose if you find Allah.

Allah said to his Prophet (SAWS) what can be translated as: **"So, in case they turn away, then say, " Allah is enough (Reckoner) for me. There is no god except He. On Him I have put my trust; He is the Lord of the Magnificent Throne.""** (TMQ, 09:129).

The believer who entrusted one's soul to Allah sees Allah's power and reason before anything and acknowledges Allah as the true doer of every action. He owns everything in His hands, that is why the believer entrusts his soul to Him at every time or place while being certain that Allah is sufficient.

Those who entrust their souls to Allah (AWJ) never rely on anyone else, but ask Allah (AWJ), as He is their Ultimate Trustee that suffices him with the lawful rather than the sinful deed and with his submission rather than his disobedience. This is why he will never turn to polytheism while entrusting his soul to Allah alone, away from any attachment to a human being, reason, ability or himself totally surrendering to Allah alone.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“He said, “O my people, have you seen (that) in case I (rely) on Supreme evidence from my Lord and He has provided me with fair provision from Him (should i corrupt it)? And in no way would I like to differ from you (and do) whatever I forbid you (to do). Decidedly I would (do) nothing except reformation, (i.e., acting righteously) so far as I am able to. And in no way is my success with anyone except with Allah; in Him I have put my trust, and to Him I turn penitent. “ (TMQ, 11:88).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And he said, “O my sons, (Or: my seeds) do not enter by one gate, and enter by separate gates; and in no way can I avail you anything (whatever) against Allah. Decidedly judgment belongs to none except Allah. On Him I have put my trust, and in Him let (all) the trusting ones then put their trust.”“ (TMQ, 12:67).**

The *ayah* explains that Allah is the sole ruler, that is why one should entrust one's soul to Him alone, and this is repeated in a lot of *ayahs* in the noble Qur'an.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Thus We have sent you among a nation even before which other nations have already passed away, to recite to them what We have revealed to you, and they disbelieve in The All-Merciful. Say, “He is my Lord; there is no god except He; on Him I put my trust and to Him is my repenting.”“ (TMQ, 13:30).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And in whatever things you differ about, then the judgment thereof belongs to Allah. “That is Allah, my Lord; in Him I have put my trust, and to Him I turn penitent”.” (TMQ, 42:10).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“The Lord of the east and the west; there is no god except He; so take Him to yourself for an Ever-Trusted Trustee.” (TMQ, 73:09).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Then they said, “On Allah we have put our trust. Our Lord, do not make us a temptation to the unjust people;” (TMQ, 10:85).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“You have already had a fair example in Ibrahîm (Abraham) and the ones with him as they said to their people, “Surely we are completely quit of you and whatever you worship apart from Allah. We disbelieve in you, and between you and us enmity has appeared, and abhorrence forever, until you believe in Allah alone.” Except that Ibrahîm said to his father, “Indeed I will definitely ask forgiveness for you; and in no way do I possess anything for you from Allah.” “Our**

Lord, in (Literally: no You) You we trust, and to You we turn penitent, and to You is the Destiny.” (TMQ, 60:04).

Prophets and messengers were the first who entrusted their souls to Allah as they are dearer to Allah and would never rely on anyone but Allah, as they need Him next to them at every minute. Those prophets are a role model for all the believers.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Their Messengers said to them, “Decidedly we are nothing except mortals like you; but Allah bestows His Bounty to whomever He decides of His bondmen. And in no way could we come up to you with an all-binding authority except by the permission of Allah, and in (Literally: on) Allah let the believers then put their trust. And what (evidence) have we that we should not put our trust in (Literally: on) Allah and He has already guided us in our ways? And indeed we will definitely (endure) patiently whatever (way) you have hurt us, and in Allah let the trusting ones then put their trust.”“ (TMQ, 14:11,12).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And the ones who emigrated in (the cause of) Allah even after they were done an injustice, indeed We will definitely locate them in the present life (Literally: the lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) a fair (location), and indeed the reward of the Hereafter is greater, if they did (only) know. (Such are) the ones who have endured patiently and have put their trust in their Lord.” (TMQ, 16:41,42).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And in no way did you recite any Book before (this), nor did you pen it with your right (hand); then the wrongdoers (Literally: the doers) would indeed suspect it. No indeed; it (i.e., the Book) is supremely evident signs in the breasts of the ones who have been brought knowledge; and in no way does anyone repudiate Our signs except the unjust.” (TMQ, 29:58,59).**

The previous *ayahs* join between the meanings of entrusting one’s soul to Allah and being patient in one *ayah* explaining that entrusting one’s soul to Allah comes before and after being patient, as stated in the *ayah* once and an order from Allah to the believers to entrust their souls to Him and another time for those who entrust their souls to Allah. The order in both cases specifies the trust in Allah alone, which means that the believer should entrust his soul to Allah since he believes in Allah.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“So, whatever thing has been brought to you is the enjoyment of the present life; (Literally: the lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) and what is in the Providence of Allah is more charitable (i.e., better) and more enduring for the ones who have believed and put their trust in their Lord,” (TMQ, 42:36).**

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And Mûsa said, “O my people, in case you have believed in Allah, then in Him put your trust, in case you are Muslims.” (i.e., you have surrendered to Allah)” (TMQ, 10:84).**

The other order includes anyone who searches for someone else to entrust his soul to so that it might aid him in his need, thus even if he is not a believer one should know that the Ultimate Trustee is Allah, as that He owns all the criteria and He is sufficient.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth; and Allah suffices for an Ever-Trusted Trustee.”** (TMQ, 04:132).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And put your full trust in Allah; and Allah suffices as an Ever-Trusted Trustee.”** (TMQ, 33:03).

Allah is The Ultimate Trustee and he witnesses everything we say or do.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“That is Allah, your Lord, there is no god except He, the Creator of everything. So worship Him; and He is an Ever-Trusted Trustee over everything.”** (TMQ, 06:102).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“So, possibly you would leave some (ayat) (verses, signs) of what is revealed to you, and your breast would be straitened by it, for that they say, “if only a hoarding had been sent down upon him, or an Angel had come with him!” Surely you are only a warner; and Allah is an Ever-Trusted Trustee over everything.”** (TMQ, 11:12).

We conclude our talk about entrusting one’s soul to Allah and those who entrust their souls to Allah, whom Allah loves (*AWJ*) by reciting Allah’s (*AWJ*) saying at the end of *surat* Hud.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And to Allah belongs the Unseen of the heavens and the earth; and to Him all Command will be returned. So worship Him and put your trust in Him; and in no way is your Lord ever heedless of whatever you do.”** (TMQ, 11:123)

This *ayah* explains that Allah owns everything and is The Eternal Owner of Sovereignty, who ordered us to worship Him and will reward us for it and He will take care of everything if we entrust our souls to Him in our worldly lives, as long as we are true in our worship and entrust our souls in Him well. We should not forget that Allah knows everything about His creation and their deeds, so don’t think that Allah is unaware of what the oppressors are doing, but he will delay them until the Day of Judgment, as everything is in His hands for the good of His servants who entrusted their souls to Him. Let us have faith in Allah’s wisdom, knowledge and ability more than our faith in ourselves, abilities and desires. O Allah let us be of those who truly entrust their souls to You we ask for your love, as you love those who entrust their souls to Allah.

Second: Those who are patient:

The believer lives his life and is surprised by what he dislikes, as every believer plans his life concerning the increase in money, children, fruits and livelihoods, but destiny comes with much tribulations of inferiority concerning all the above. This is how Allah will know those believers who are true and patient and distinguishing the good from the bad. Some believers wait and stand firm in the face of what Allah ordained remaining obedient no matter what happens to them from bitterness while enduring with patience without becoming weak or less diligent. The believer would keep on supplicating to The Sovereign, The All-Patient asking His aid, forgiveness and victory over the infidels. Those are the patient who are loved by Allah (*AWJ*) and they will be rewarded in the hereafter.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Or (even) did you reckon that you would enter the Garden and Allah does not as yet know (i.e., has not yet proved, tested) who of you have striven, and that He may know the patient? And indeed you readily coveted death even before you met it; then you have already seen it, and you were looking (at it). And in no way is Muhammad (anything) except a Messenger; the Messengers have already passed away before him. Then, will it be that, in case he dies or is killed, will you turn (Literally: turn (s) over on) on your heels? And whoever turns (Literally: turn (s) over on) on his heels, then he will never harm Allah in anything; and Allah will recompense the thankful. And in no way is a self to die except by the permission of Allah, at an appointed term; (Literally: an appointed book) and whoever is willing to have the requital of the present (life), (Literally: this lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) We will bring him of it; and whoever is willing to have the requital of the Hereafter, We will bring him of it; and We will soon recompense the thankful. And similarly many a Prophet there has been along with whom myriads manifold have fought; so in no way did they feel feeble for whatever afflicted them in the way of Allah, and in no way did they weaken, and in no way did they yield themselves; and Allah loves the patient. And in no way was their saying anything except that they said, “Our Lord, forgive us our guilty (deeds), and our extravagance in our Command, (Your Command to us) and make firm our feet, and vindicate us over the disbelieving people.” So Allah has brought them the requital of the present (life), (Literally: this lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) and the fairest requital of the Hereafter; and Allah loves the fair-doers.” (TMQ, 03:142-148).**

The verses talk about scrutiny of the believers to find out those who struggled and the patient ones, as patience is a kind of *jihad* for the sake of Allah. The believer strives at the time of adversity, good times and when in distress.

One of the hardest types of trials that believers must endure while remaining patient is at the death of a loved one and our role model is the Prophet (SAWS). A believer might feel his heart break over the loss of a loved one feeling the agony of death and the pain of separation. Those who wait in patience are those who don't become weak when facing death for the sake of Allah and ask Allah The All-Patient to help them remain strong filling their hearts with patience and acceptance for what Allah ordained. They would constantly supplicate to Allah day and night in public and secretly standing strongly on the straight path, seeking victory for Allah over their enemies.

Foregoing, it is clear that the three types of believers loved by Allah (AWJ) are only linked to fighting for His sake like a compact structure, preceded by entrusting one's soul to Allah and entailing patience. Entrusting one's soul to Allah when fighting the enemies of Allah is never without the patience that makes the believer wait for Allah's order happens. Patience includes entrusting one's soul to Allah and surrendering to Allah completely while fighting the insinuations of Satan, as the path to paradise is paved with overcoming one's lust and the path to hell is paved with pleasures and desires. The highest level of patience and entrusting one's soul to Allah is manifested when fighting for the sake of Allah, which is the peak of Islam. These three types of believers are gathered in one section. O Allah make us of those who entrust their souls to You and those who remain patient in suffering and adversity, without complaining and make us of those who fight for Your sake as a compact structure and grant us Your love and the love of those who love You and the love of any deed that would bring us closer to Your love.

One of the most beautiful names of Allah The All-Patient

The All-Patient is the One who does not rush to punish the sinner. He does not rush with the act before the performance of His wisdom, dignity and high status and He is the one who meets offence with charity and loyalty. *Subhan Allah* (Glorified be Allah) The All-Patient who gives a chance for sinners without acting hastily, as He handles matters each at its own pace without any rush.

This is the ultimate degree of patience and forbearing.

The All-Patient is the source of patience for everyone, whether patience for something The All-Patient ordained or patience in the face of harmed caused by others. The All-Patient teaches us also not to follow the sudden sentiments and rush to judgments and actions. We might act or say things that require much thought and patience concerning the proper timing, place or method.

Patience also entails giving up on one's wishes concerning delaying what Allah wishes to accelerate or rush what is delayed; the basis of patience is true faith. Entrusting one's soul to Allah fully means trusting Allah's wisdom and judgment that is why patience represents half of the faith. Patience is the cure for all what is happening to people during their daily lives and might hurt them or seems different that their plans no matter how small this might be. That is why Abu-Bakr as-Sideeq used to say (Surely we belong to Allah, and surely to Him we are returning) when the lantern was extinguished. A Muslim is in constant need for patience to derive from it every small or big issue. The patient does not make himself patient, but he needs Allah to grant him this patience and serve Him by it.

Patience:

1. Patience comes when seeking the All-Patient.

A believer can never become patient without the aid of Allah (*AWJ*).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“Mûsa said to his people, “Beseech Allah for help and be patient; surely the earth (belongs) to Allah. He causes whomever He decides among His bondmen to inherit it, and the (prosperous) end is for the pious.”“** (TMQ, 97:128).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And seek help in patience and prayer; and surely it is indeed great (i.e., formidable, hard) except for the submissive.”** (TMQ, 02:45).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“O you who have believed, seek help in patience and prayer; surely Allah is with the patient.”** (TMQ, 02:153).

Magicians did seek Allah (*AWJ*) when they believed in the miracle that came at the hands of Musa (*AS*) (Moses) after being threatened by Pharaoh, who told them that he will kill them and they said what can be translated as, **“And in no way do you take vengeance upon us except that we have believed in the signs of our Lord as soon they came to us. Our Lord, pour out upon us patience and take us to Yourself as Muslims.”** “ (TMQ, 07:126).

And when Talut's army met the elite believers with Galut and said what can be translated as, **“And as soon as they went forth against Jalût (Goliath) and his hosts, they said, “Our Lord, pour out upon us patience, and make firm our feet, and give us victory over the**

disbelieving people!” So they routed them, by the permission of Allah, and Dawûd (David) killed Jaûlt; (Goliath) and Allah brought him the kingship, and (the) Wisdom, and He taught him (part of) whatever (knowledge) He decides. And had it not been for the repelling by Allah of mankind, some by means of others, (Literally: by means of some) the earth would indeed have corrupted; but Allah is The Owner of Grace over the worlds.” (TMQ, 02:250-251).

That is why if a disaster or something bad happens to a believer he should seek refuge in Allah and ask Him to grant him the patience. The most hated thing to a person is death and that is why when the magicians and Talut’s army of believers came close to death he asked Allah to grant them the patience to face the tragedy of death, because only with the help of Allah can they become patient in the face of death, as long as it is for the sake of Allah in support of Allah’s (AWJ) religion, hence patience comes only from Allah and for the sake of His love and reward, which is the utmost intention.

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And (endure) patiently, and in no way is your patience with the help of anyone except with Allah. And do not grieve for them, nor be straitened for whatever they scheme.” (TMQ, 16:127).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And be not bountiful, (hoping) to gain more, And to your Lord (endure) patiently!” (TMQ, 74:06,07).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And who (endure) patiently seeking the Face of their Lord, and keep up the prayer, and expend of whatever We have provided them, secretly and in public, and who parry an odious (act) with a fair one; those will have the (Ultimate) Outcome of the Residence.” (13:22).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And (endure) patiently under the Judgment of your Lord, (for) then surely you are under Our Eyes, and extol with the praise (s) of your Lord when you rise up.” (TMQ, 52:48).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And He has recompensed them for (enduring) patiently with a Garden and silk.” (TMQ, 76:12).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“Surely today, I have recompensed them for that they (endured) patiently; (and) (i.e., because) they are the ones who are triumphant.”“ (TMQ, 23:111).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“Those will be recompensed with the compartment (s) for that they (endured) patiently, and they shall be granted therein a greeting and “Peace!”“ (TMQ, 25:75).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“Those will be brought their reward twice (over) for that they patiently (endured), and parry an odious (deed) by a fair (one), and expend of what We have provided them. (TMQ, 28:54).**

Allah says what can be translated as, **“Say, (This is addressed to the Prophet) “O My bondmen who have believed, be pious to your Lord. For the ones who do fair (deeds) in this present (life) (Literally: this lowly (life), i.e., the life of this world) there is a fair (reward), and the earth of Allah is wide. Surely (the) patient will only be paid their reward in full without reckoning.”“ (TMQ, 39:10).**

2. Patience is the best thing for those who are patient.

It is one of the traits of prophets – Allah’s peace and prayers upon them, especially those Messengers endowed with endurance. Allah says what can be translated as, **“So (endure) patiently, as the Messengers endowed with resolve (endured) patiently; and do not seek to hasten (the torment) for them; it will be as if, on the Day they see what they are promised, they had not lingered except for an hour of a (single) daytime. It is a proclamation! Then who will be caused to perish except the immoral people?”** (TMQ, 46:35).

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And Ismaïl (Ishmael) and Idrîs and Thulkifl, each was of the patient.”** (TMQ, 21:85).

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And in case you (This is addressed to all believers) punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith you were punished; and indeed in case you endure patiently, indeed it is more charitable of the patient.”** (TMQ, 16:126).

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And whoever of you is unable to (provide) ample (means) for marrying (free) believing women in wedlock, then (let him take) from the believing handmaids that your right hands possess; and Allah knows best your belief, the ones of you are as the others (Literally: Some of you are from some others, i.e., you are equal). So marry them by the permission of their families, (i.e. their folk) and bring them their rewards with beneficence, as (women) in wedlock, other than in fornication or taking mates to themselves. (So) when they are in wedlock, (then) in case they come up with an obscenity, (5) they shall have then half the torment of free women in wedlock. That is for the ones of you who are apprehensive of distress; (i.e., sin) (and) to be patient is more charitable for you; and Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.”** (TMQ, 04:25).

3. Patience is a type of entrusting one’s soul to Allah

A believer entrusts his soul to Allah concerning everything and the first thing is that which happens in his life, which he hates and faith is the source of entrusting one’s soul to Allah and accepting what Allah ordered. Patience is the fruit of this entrustment until Allah ends a matter that was ordained, that is why the noble Qur’an praised those who understood this and won those two qualities: Patience and entrusting one’s soul to Allah.

Allah says what can be translated as, **“And the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness, indeed We will definitely locate them in compartments of the Garden, from beneath which rivers run, eternally (abiding) therein. Excellent is the reward of the (ones) (Literally: of the doers) who do (good)! Who (endure) patiently and put their trust in their Lord.”** (TMQ, 29:58,59).

The ayah explains that those who believed and did good deeds are patient concerning what Allah ordained and patient when it comes to those who harm them, as they are described also as those who entrust their souls to Allah alone, hence those two qualities (patience) and (entrusting one’s soul to Allah) are associated in the heart of a believer. Every believer is subject to testing and there is no other path to paradise without patience, as the believer can never be patient without entrusting his soul to Allah and he can never entrust his soul to Allah without a heart filled with faith.

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And what (evidence) have we that we should not put our trust in (Literally: on) Allah and He has already guided us in our ways? And indeed we will definitely (endure) patiently whatever (way) you have hurt us, and in Allah let the trusting ones then put their trust.”**“ (TMQ, 14:12).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And in no way will anyone be granted (such fairness) except the ones who (endure) patiently; and in no way will anyone be granted it except an owner of a tremendous fortune (Literally: Portion) (in the Hereafter).”** (TMQ, 41:35).

Allah says what can be translated as: **“And the ones to whom knowledge was brought said, “Woe to you! The requital of Allah is more charitable (i.e., better) for him who believes and does righteousness; and none will be granted (Literally: made to receive) except the patient.”** (TMQ, 28:80).

We conclude that those who are patient are those who entrust their souls to Allah, as well as the thankful. Believers in good times thank Allah and in bad times remain patient. If patience is half of faith then the other half is giving thanks, as the patient believer is thankful.

4. Patience in the face of adversity and thanks for the blessing:

Allah says what can be translated as, **“Yet they said, “Our Lord, prolong (the stages) between our journeys.” And they did injustice to themselves, so We made them (as only) discourses, and we tore them utterly to pieces. Surely in that are indeed signs for every (person) most patient, (and) constantly thankful.”** (TMQ, 34:19).

Allah says what can be translated as, **“In case He (so) decides, He quiets the wind, (and) so they linger on motionless on its surface. Surely in that are indeed signs for every (man) most patient, constantly thankful.”** (TMQ, 42:33).

5. The preferred patience is that without complaint:

Patience is a deed of the heart and a fruit of acceptance to Allah’s orders, what confirms this is the tongue during the time of adversity. Hence comes the description in the noble Qur’an concerning Ya’qub (AS) (Jacob) when he lost his son Yusuf (AS) (Joseph) as a becoming patience.

Allah says what can be translated as, **“So (endure) patiently with a becoming patience; “** (TMQ, 70:05).

Allah says what can be translated as, **“He (Their father) said, “No indeed, (but) your selves instigated you to do (their) command; yet patience is becoming! It may be that Allah would (make) them altogether come up to me. Surely He, Ever He, is The Ever-Knowing, The Ever-Wise.”**“ (TMQ, 12:83).

Becoming patience does not contradict with they crying of the afflicted person, as the Prophet (SAWS) cried at the loss of his son Ibrahim and when he was asked about those tears he said: It is a mercy that Allah placed in the hearts of his servants, whoever has no mercy will not be granted mercy and we only say what is accepted by Allah”.

6. Patience is a manifestation of piety which places the believer in the status of charity:

Yusuf (AS) (Joseph) summarized this learned wisdom from his story with his brothers. Allah says what can be translated as, **“They said, “Is it sure that you, indeed you, are Yûsuf?” (Joseph) “I am Yûsuf, “ he said, “and this is my brother. Allah has already been bounteous to us. Surely whoever is pious and (endures) patiently, then surely Allah does not waste the reward of the fair-doers.”“** (TMQ, 12:90).

This verse shows that Yusuf (AS) was pious and patient in facing everything that happened to him in terms of injustices from his own brothers then the humiliation of slavery until Allah (SWT) turned things around for him. And this was his path on which he followed those who do *ihsan*, for Allah (SWT) will never let their patience and piety unrewarded.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And (endure) patiently, (for) then surely Allah does not leave to waste the reward of the fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 11 :115).

Allah (SWT) commanded those who are patient to follow up their patience with piety and not contradict it with any saying or action at the time of a calamity or afterwards. For Satan will be awaiting any chance to lure them into objecting and committing sins either at hard times or after they have passed. This is why we need to be careful not to cross that line. If we truly wish to be among those who are loved by Allah (SWT) then we must put patience and piety ahead of us as our ultimate target. This way, Satan will not even stand a chance when he finds himself dealing with such faithful and pious people.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“In case a fair (reward) touches you, (i.e. the believers) it vexes them; and in case an odious (disadvantage) afflicts you, they exult with it. And in case you are patient and pious, their plotting will harm you nothing. Surely Allah is Supremely Encompassing of whatever they do.”** (TMQ, 3 :120).

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Indeed you will definitely be tried in your riches and your selves and indeed you will definitely hear much hurt from the ones to whom the Book was brought even before you, and from (the ones) who have associated; (i.e. have associated others with Allah) and in case you are patient and pious, then surely that is (an indication) of (true) resolve concerning His (i.e. the Commands of Allah) Commands.”** (TMQ, 3 :186).

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“Mûsa (Moses) said to them, “Cast you down whatever you will be casting.”“** (TMQ, 26:43).

The verses demonstrate that when one is patient at the face of injustice while thinking that they are stronger for doing so since patience against injustice of people and continuing to be pious is among the hardest things a person can do. To do so, one must possess remarkable faith and considerable reliance on Allah (SWT) in order to maintain that stand.

Patience only bring good tidings to its people. If someone treats you unkindly, then give them their seventy excuses as the Prophet (SAWS) instructs us. Always remind yourself that the other person may have a valid excuse or may have done injustice to you while unaware of doing so. One should not give Satan a chance to even provoke him to seek revenge, while always reminding himself that forgiveness is closer to true faith than revenge is.

The Prophet (SAWS), when he saw the mutilated body of Hamza (RA) after the battle of Uhud, swore to tear seventy people apart in return. So Allah (SWT) then said what can be

translated as, **“And in case you (This is addressed to all believers) punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith you were punished; and indeed in case you endure patiently, indeed it is more charitable of the patient. And (endure) patiently, and in no way is your patience with the help of anyone except with Allah. And do not grieve for them, nor be straitened for whatever they scheme. Surely Allah is with the ones who have been pious and the ones who are fair-doers.”** (TMQ, 16:126-128).

7. Patience must continue until Allah (SWT) arranges a way out:

When one is afflicted with calamity, they often wonder how long will they be patient and when the pain increases while the patience decreases, one wishes for the entire dilemma to be over as their patience is running out. Yet, when a person is truly a believer, their patience must go on starting from the initial shock until Allah (SWT) decrees for the situation to end.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And closely follow what is revealed to you, and (endure) patiently until Allah judges; and He is The Most Charitable of judges.”** (TMQ, 10:109).

A believer must seek Allah for guidance in such rough times through supplication and prayer using the name of ‘The All-Patient’. He may also seek the support of his friends and brothers who are true believers as well and will advise him well.

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And the Day We will muster them altogether, thereafter we say to the ones who associated (other gods with Allah), “To your place, you and your associates!” Then We will distinguish between them, and the associates will say, (i.e., to the associators) “In no way did you worship us.”** (TMQ, 18:28).

The patience of a believer must go on, never wavering, as did Yunus (AS) when he gave up on his people believing in Allah. Yunus (AS) left them and went to sea. Hence, this was Allah’s punishment for him for not waiting until Allah (SWT) decreed for the affliction to end.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“So (endure) patiently under the Judgment of your Lord, and do not be as the Companion of the Whale (Prophet Yûnus “Jonah”) as he called out, as he (was) made to choke (inwardly). Had there not overtaken him a favor from his Lord, indeed he would have been flung off upon the naked shore (i.e., the wilderness) (while) he was a reprobate.”** (TMQ, 68:48-49).

And in order for the believers to know that Allah (SWT) is always by their side and that difficult times will not last, Allah (SWT) says in what can be translated as, **“So surely with difficulty comes ease. Surely with difficulty comes ease.”** (TMQ, 94 :5-6).

In the verse difficulty is mentioned only once yet the easier times are twice.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Or (even) did you reckon that you should enter the Garden, while as yet there had not come up to you the like of (the ones) who passed away even before you? Misery and tribulation touched them, and (they) were shaken until the Messenger and the ones who believed with him said, “When does victory from Allah (come)?” Verily, victory from Allah is surely near.”** (TMQ, 2 :214).

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And seek help in patience and prayer; and surely it is indeed great (i.e., formidable, hard) except for the submissive.”** (TMQ, 2 :45).

And in another verse, Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, seek help in patience and prayer; surely Allah is with the patient.”** (TMQ, 2 :153).

We note in the last two verses that Allah (*SWT*) commands us to have reliance in Him (*SWT*), patience and prayer. While the second verse ends with speaking about those who are patient, the first verse ends with those who are submissive in prayer. This demonstrates that patience, the work of the hearts, is translated through one’s prayer. If one’s patience increases, the believer’s submission in prayer increases as well as his consistency in it. If a believer’s patience decreases, so will his submission in prayer. Prayer may even be a heavy burden in such case, approached with laziness and sometimes every forgotten or not prayed on time.

The verses also indicate that prayer is the means by which a believer can become one of the patient ones whether in good times or bad times. Especially during hard times, prayer strengthens one’s resolve and patience, as well as their faith and reliance on Allah (*SWT*) which is a great assistance in accepting Allah’s decree and being patient in dealing with it.

The second verse also demonstrated the importance of keeping one’s prayer and the need to be patient with it, not allowing the self, Satan, one’s desires or this world to keep him away from his prayer to his Lord (*SWT*). For the mention and worship of Allah (*SWT*) is greater and more important than anything whether it is commerce or play. Prayer is always more important than everything else, anytime and anywhere.

The believer’s need for prayer increases during the times of calamity, hence Allah ‘s command to the believers to get through such times through prayers, patience, supplication and true reliance on Allah (*SWT*). We are also commanded to encourage one another to do so.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And (by) the afternoon! (Or: time). Surely man is indeed in (sheer) loss. Except the ones who have believed, and done deeds of righteousness, and enjoin each other to the Truth, and enjoin each other to patience.”** (TMQ, 103:1-3).

Allah (*SWT*) commanded Muslims to stay united and patient. We must note Allah’s love for those who are patient in the following verse where Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And similarly many a Prophet there has been along with whom myriads manifold have fought; so in no way did they feel feeble for whatever afflicted them in the way of Allah, and in no way did they weaken, and in no way did they yield themselves; and Allah loves the patient.”** (TMQ, 3 :146).

8. Allah (*SWT*) commanded the believers to be patient when calamity hits the entire *Ummah* (Muslim nation).

Only when they unite in patience and continue their good deeds, does Allah (*SWT*) prove to them His love.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, **“And indeed We will definitely try you with something of fear and hunger, and diminution of riches, and selves, and products; and give glad tidings to the patient. Who, when an affliction afflicts them, say, “Surely we**

belong to Allah, and surely to Him we are returning.” Upon those are the prayers from their Lord, and mercy; and those are they (who) are the right-guided.” (TMQ, 2 :155-157).

From the previous verses, it is evident that the sign of a patient person is at the time of calamity, during the first shock. It is vital for them to remember that they are created by Allah (SWT) and to Him they return, that is when they say «From Allah we came and to Allah we return». That is when mercy engulfs them, where Allah (SWT) fills their hearts with patience and guidance.

It is also important to note from the verse’s style that the speech is aimed at a group, hence when Allah (SWT) proves His love and support of those who are patient, He (SWT) does so to them as a group.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Then as soon as Talût (Saul) departed with the hosts, he said, “Surely Allah will be trying you with a river; so whoever drinks of it, then he is not of me, and whoever does not taste (Literally: does not feed on it) it, then surely he is of me, excepting him who scoops up (a scoop) with his hand.” Then they drank of it except a few of them. Then, as soon as he passed over it, he and the ones who believed with him, they said, “We have no capability today against Jalût (Goliath) and his hosts.” (But) the ones who expect that they will be meeting Allah said, “How often a little community has overcome a much (larger) community by the permission of Allah; and Allah is with the patient.” (TMQ, 2 :249).**

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not contend together, (and) so you would be disheartened and your vigor goes away; and (endure) patiently; surely Allah is with the patient.” (TMQ, 8 :46).**

This is why we find Allah’s command clearly targeted to the Ummah, individuals and groups, to be patient and to be united and supportive of one another.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, be patient, and vie in patience, and be garrisoned (i.e., Keep a standing army ready to defend you) and be pious to Allah, that possibly you would prosper.” (TMQ, 3 :200).**

Here we see clearly the relation between unity and patience which is also the means to achieve piety in order to reach the straight path as a Muslim Ummah, united by one Lord and one book.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely this nation of yours is one nation, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.” (TMQ, 21:92).**

This is why Allah (SWT) made the responsibility of believers supporting one another at the times of calamity a right on every Muslim. Believers must remind one another to be patient and to have faith in Allah, they must also remind one another to mention Allah in order to alleviate the burden of the calamity on himself. This is why Allah (SWT) encouraged us to visit the sick and aid those going through rough times such as the family of the deceased. In such tough times, believers become like one body, aiding one another to go through the rough times and feeling each other’s pains and turmoil.

When Allah (SWT) loves a believer, He (SWT) loves him as being part of a group, aiding one another on obeying Allah and being patient in the face of difficult times. And indeed, there is no way for a believer to reach Allah (SWT) while alienated from the reality of the Muslims around him and not being a part of their lives. One must work on empowering their Ummah and helping with whatever befalls it. This is why one must be among a group of good companions who will aid and support one another on obeying Allah and doing the good deeds which He (SWT) commanded us to do.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely (for) male Muslims and female Muslims, and male believers and female believers, and devout males and devout females and sincere males and sincere females, and patient males and patient females, and submissive males and submissive females, and male donators and female donators, and fasting males and fasting females, and males who preserve their private parts and females who preserve their private parts, and males who are much mindful of Allah and females who are much mindful of Allah - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a magnificent reward.”** (TMQ, 33:35).

In another verse, Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“It is not benignancy that you turn your faces around in the direction of East and West; but benignancy is (in him) who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Prophets, and brings wealth in spite of his love for it (Or: offers out of love for Him) to near kinsmen, and the orphans, and the indigent, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and (to ransom) necks, (i.e. captives “slaves”) and keeps up the prayer, and bring the Zakat, (i.e. pay the poor-dues) and they who fulfill their covenant when they have covenanted, and the patient (ones) in misery and tribulation, and while in violence; (i.e. during fighting) those are (they) who act sincerely, and those are they who are the pious.»**” (TMQ, 2 :177).

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not contend together, (and) so you would be disheartened and your vigor goes away; and (endure) patiently; surely Allah is with the patient.”** (TMQ, 8:46).

Allah’s warning to the believers from fighting and disagreeing with one another was due to the fact that this will cause their unity to break and hence become weaker and easier to overcome by their enemies. Allah (SWT) is with us when we are patient and persevere for the sake of protecting one another, which is when one can clearly see that the reward of patience is according to the level of one’s patience and its consequential result on society. And just like patience has had a positive effect on the armies of Muslims and the spread of Islam as well as protecting the Muslim Ummah from separation and disunity. Indeed patience in the face of ignorance and prejudice, as well as abstaining from seeking revenge, will surely preserve the unity of the Ummah.

Hence in this verse Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And indeed he who (endures) patiently and forgives, surely that is indeed (an act of true) resolve concerning His Commands.”** (TMQ, 42:43).

Patience is among the attributes of the venerating ones

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And for every nation We have made a ritual that they may mention the Name of Allah over such brute cattle (Anaam includes) as He has provided them. So your God is One God; then to Him surrender and give good**

tidings to the venerating ones. Who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts are tremulous, and the patient ones (in face) of whatever afflicts them, and the ones keeping up the prayer and (who) expend of whatever We have provided them.” (TMQ, 22:34-35).

One must note that the four attributes of the venerating ones is patience in the face of what has befallen them (the patient ones) – the ones keeping up the prayers – when Allah is mentioned, their hearts are tremulous – and those who expend of whatever Allah has provided them (which may increase and decrease from time to time). The last attribute can not be achieved through giving away (expending) money which was stolen for example, this attribute must be of honest means. In those attributes, we notice the connection between patience and prayer. We also note that the mention of Allah’s name makes their hearts tremulous. How is that ?

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“The ones who have believed and whose hearts (feel) composed with the Remembrance of Allah -verily in the Remembrance of Allah the hearts are composed.” (TMQ, 13:28).**

Scholars said that when a believer mentions the name of Allah (SWT) at a time of calamity of this world, his heart becomes calm and serene. While when a believer mentions the name of Allah (SWT) at a time of calamity of this world and the hereafter, then his heart becomes afraid and trembles from the wrath of Allah and for what he brought upon himself.

Conclusion on the topic of patience:

A believer must learn that Allah (SWT) had destined things for us and asked us of other things. Here is the explanation of the above:

Part One: What Allah (SWT) destined for us

What Allah (SWT) destined us for has been decreed solely by Allah. That destiny is the choice of Allah, in His infinite wisdom and knowledge, which we have no say in. Allah (SWT) has hidden everything that has to do with our destiny from us, yet we can not escape that destiny.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “Never will anything afflict us except what Allah has prescribed for us; He is our Supreme Patronizer; and on Allah let the believers then put their trust.” (TMQ, 9:51).**

Therefore, humans have no knowledge of what Allah (SWT) has prescribed for us for we have no say in them and will not be asked about them on the day of judgment. Yet, a true believer must accept what Allah prescribes for him with the patience and strength that comes with true faith. We ought to stay away from saying things like «what if» and «how come» for these are way to let Satan in our hearts and minds.

And we must all be mindful of the fact that what has befallen us would not have missed us no matter what we think, and what has missed us was not destined for us no matter what we could have changed. These matters are not ours to think of or occupy our minds with and one should not waste one’s times thinking of them for we do not have the ability to comprehend or change them. So do not risk committing sins by questing what is not yours in the first place, and do not rush or delay things which can not possibly be rushed or delayed by your

efforts alone. We are prescribed for things like; the date we are born, the date we die, how many children one will have, their genders, sickness and other things.

Part Two: What Allah wanted of us

This part includes what Allah (*SWT*) commanded and prohibited us of, for we have a hand in those matters and will be asked about them,

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**And guided him on the two highways (of good and evil)?”** (TMQ, 90 :10).

Humans are given free will to make decisions and choices in many matters, and will be judged on them on the day of judgment.

Allah (*SWT*) says what can be translated as, “**So whoever does an atom's weight of charity will see it. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.**” (TMQ, 99:7-8).

So good tidings are for those who work hard on obeying Allah (*SWT*) and stay away from what angers Him in hope of obtaining His pleasure and paradise on such a day where neither money nor power can help a man, but a pure heart can. Those matters include praying, kindness and justice towards people, charity, going by Allah’s book and the sunnah of the Prophet (*SAWS*), racing to doing good deeds, kindness to the parents, fasting, mentioning of Allah and seeking *halal* (legitimate) means of making a living.

The Prophet (*SAWS*) said, «On the day of judgment, every man is asked about four things : his life and what he has spent it on, his body and what he has exerted it for, his money and how he earned it and his knowledge and what he did with it.» [Reported by ad-Daramy].

The source of one’s income and what he spends his money on is among the matters which Allah (*SWT*) wanted us to think careful about, for we are given free will in what we choose to do with it. Allah (*SWT*) does not care how much money we have each acquired, yet He (*SWT*) will judge us on how we have obtained our money and whether the means to do so were legitimate or not.

One must remember that sustenance comes from Allah (*SWT*) alone, so do not waste your time and energy trying to change that for what really matters is how legitimate and ethical your means of sustenance are. What we spend our money on is also an important matter, for money may tempt many of us to spend on things which Allah (*SWT*) has prohibited us from. Hence, in this case money has become a way through which we have disobeyed Allah (*SWT*).

We must all try our hardest to make sure we are earning our income through legitimate means and that we are spending our money only on the things which Allah (*SWT*) has allowed us to enjoy in life.

True believers are the ones who accept what Allah (*SWT*) has prescribed for them and do their best to obey Allah (*SWT*) through those means while knowing that patience in the face of difficulty will only strengthen his faith and cause Allah (*SWT*) to love him as we have learnt from the previous verses.

We pray to Allah (SWT) that we are all among those who truly comprehend then follow that with actual implementation of what they understood in hope of pleasing Allah (SWT), while remaining patient, for Allah (SWT) loves those who are well-doers.

Third: Those fighting for the sake of Allah side by side:

Introduction:

Allah (SWT) says at the beginning of the chapter of as-Saff what can be translated as, **“Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth extols to Allah; and He is The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise. O you who have believed, why do you say that which you do not perform? (i.e., occupants) Greatly detested (Literally: great is detesting) (is it) in the Reckoning of Allah, that you say what you do not perform. (i.e., occupants). Surely Allah loves the ones who fight in His way in rank (s) as if they were a compact structure.” (TMQ, 61 :1-4).**

It is interesting to note that in the chapter of al-Saff, there are three calls beginning with «O you who have believed»...

First : The call to the believers do as they say

Second : Sign of the trade which saves one from severe torture, leads to the forgiveness of sins, brings victory and sends one to paradise. The price is strive for the same of Allah with one's money and soul.

Third : To also fight for the sake of Allah, His Prophet, His religion and His messengers.

The calls are for each believer to believe in what they claim to have of faith in their hearts, to leap to the victory for the religion of Allah in fighting the non-believers with their money and souls seeking the reward promised by Allah.

Allah (SWT) promises His love to those who follow this call.

How this group is different than other groups who are also loved by Allah :

- 1) Allah promises His love in this verse to those who actually do something, not necessarily those who are characterized by certain attributes (the patient ones, the pious one...) These groups are characterized by certain characteristics which are dominant over their character so they became known for them. Yet this group in particular fights for the sake of Allah and is loved by Allah as a result, moreover they are in the highest ranks as they are considered to be the truest form of showing one's love for Allah.
- 2) Allah (SWT) proves His love not only to each fighter, as He proves His loves to each person who does *ih-san* or every pious person for example, but Allah (SWT) demands that this fighting have the following conditions :
 - B- That the fighting be for the sake of Allah and not for any other reason.
 - C- That the fighting be among the group of believers, and not as a separate group or as an individual. The fighting must be as a group of believers just as they stand in one line while prayer.

- D- That the believers be united as the bricks of a wall is, each beside the other in meticulous order. Each believers supporting and completing the role of the other.

The believers who are fighting in every side of the world in fact form one wall, for despite the difference in time, place, languages and cultures yet they are all fighting as a part of one Ummah for one cause that will never change over time. That cause is the everlasting struggle between the good and the evil.

If the above conditions are present in the fighting, then those who are fighting are among the ones love by Allah (SWT), protect and promised victory by him. This victory is promised to them no matter how great the numbers are, as we can learn from the story of Talut and Jalut in the following verses:

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Then as soon as Talût (Saul) departed with the hosts, he said, “Surely Allah will be trying you with a river; so whoever drinks of it, then he is not of me, and whoever does not taste (Literally: does not feed on it) it, then surely he is of me, excepting him who scoops up (a scoop) with his hand.” Then they drank of it except a few of them. Then, as soon as he passed over it, he and the ones who believed with him, they said, “We have no capability today against Jalût (Goliath) and his hosts.” (But) the ones who expect that they will be meeting Allah said, “How often a little community has overcome a much (larger) community by the permission of Allah; and Allah is with the patient.” And as soon as they went forth against Jalût (Goliath) and his hosts, they said, “Our Lord, pour out upon us patience, and make firm our feet, and give us victory over the disbelieving people!” So they routed them, by the permission of Allah, and Dawûd (David) killed Jaûlt; (Goliath) and Allah brought him the kingship, and (the) Wisdom, and He taught him (part of) whatever (knowledge) He decides. And had it not been for the repelling by Allah of mankind, some by means of others, (Literally: by means of some) the earth would indeed have corrupted; but Allah is The Owner of Grace over the worlds.” (TMQ, 2 :249-251).**

- 3) This Qur’anic story is the best guide to every believer as to the concept of fighting for the sake of Allah.

And by going over those verses we learn the following:

- 1- Whoever among the believers fights for the sake of getting back their homes from which they were forcefully kicked out, then that is for the sake of Allah. Whoever fights for the sake of their money, honor or for voicing the words of Allah, then there fought for the sake of Allah.
- 2- Among the most important requirements for fighting is choosing the right leader who commands respect and obedience. This choice should not be based on money for example, but on the knowledge and strength of the leader.

After choosing the leader, comes time to test the fighters who are chosen by their leader. The fighters are test for their patience, endurance and honesty.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Then as soon as Talût (Saul) departed with the hosts, he said, “Surely Allah will be trying you with a river; so whoever drinks of it, then he is not of me, and whoever does not taste (Literally: does not feed on it) it, then surely he is of me, excepting him who scoops up (a scoop) with his hand.” Then they drank of it except a few of them. Then, as soon as he passed over it, he and the ones who**

believed with him, they said, “We have no capability today against Jalût (Goliath) and his hosts.” (But) the ones who expect that they will be meeting Allah said, “How often a little community has overcome a much (larger) community by the permission of Allah; and Allah is with the patient.” (TMQ, 2 :249).

Seeking the help of Allah (SWT) at the time of meeting the enemy is vital, so is supplicating to Allah for perseverance and victory.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And as soon as they went forth against Jalût (Goliath)and his hosts, they said, “Our Lord, pour out upon us patience, and make firm our feet, and give us victory over the disbelieving people!” (TMQ, 2 :250).**

How can those who are backed up by Allah’s support and blessings be defeated in fighting? Those fighters are made stronger and tougher with the blessings of Allah and His power, as long as they stand united and with patience unafraid of anyone but Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And indeed We sent even before you Messengers to their people; then they came to them with the supreme evidence. So We took vengeance upon (those) who (committed) crimes; and it is truly (binding) on Us to (give) victory to the believers.” (TMQ, 30:47).**

Nuclear, mass destruction and biological weapons may scare minds and hearts unaware of Allah and His abilities, nor believing in His blessings and miracles. Yet the hearts of true believers who rely on Allah and have true faith can not possibly fear such things. Those hearts only fear Allah and his wrath, and they never know fear of anything else no matter how complicate and scary they seem. Allah (SWT) only commanded the fighting believers to do their best to be prepared, yet He did not command them to worry about the amenities of the enemies. Allah (SWT) will take care of instilling terror in their hearts even when facing the smallest number of believers.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And prepare for them whatever power and whatever garrisoned horses you can, to (spread) awe thereby into (the hearts) of the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others, apart from them (i.e., besides them) that you do not know; Allah knows them. And whatever you expend in the way of Allah will be repaid you in full, and you will not be done an injustice.” (TMQ, 8:60).**

◀ **Allah’s love for groups, not individuals**

Allah specified three conditions for the fighter to whom He promised his love as :

- 1- Fighting only for the sake of Allah with sincerity
- 2- Unity
- 3- Brotherhood and compassion

We can note that those conditions are more strict than with the other cases where Allah promises His love to believers who have certain attributes (patience, piety, etc).

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, do not violate the way marks of Allah, nor the Inviolable Month, nor the offering, nor the garlands, nor the ones repairing to the Inviolable Home seeking from their Lord Grace and all-blessed Satisfaction; and when you are not on pilgrimage, (Literally: when you have become legally permissible, i.e., no longer in the sanctified state of a pilgrim) then (go game)**

hunting. And do not let antagonism of a people who barred you from the Inviolable Mosque provoke you to transgress. And help one another to benignancy and piety, and do not help one another to vice and hostility, and be pious to Allah; surely Allah is strict in punishment.” (TMQ, 5 :2).

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And adhere firmly to the Rope (i.e. the Covenant of Allah=the Qur’an) of Allah, altogether, and do not be disunited ; and remember the favor of Allah upon you as you were enemies, then He brought your hearts together, (Literally : joined « between ») so you have become brethren by His favor. And you were upon the brink of a hole of the Fire, so He rescued you from it. Thus Allah makes evident His signs to you, that possibly you would be guided.” (TMQ, 3 :103).**

Allah (SWT) also says what can be translated as, **“And (suffer) yourself to (endure) patiently with the ones who invoke their Lord in the early morning and nightfall, willing to seek His Face, and do not let your eyes go past them, (i.e., overlook them) willing (to gain) the adornment of the present life; (Literally: the lowly life, i.e., the life of this world) and do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, and who closely follows his own prejudices, and to whom the Command (i.e., the Command of Allah to him, or: his affair) has been all excess (i.e., He has been most disbelieving).” (TMQ, 18:28).**

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“O you who have believed, whoever of you turns back from His Allah's religion, then Allah will eventually come up with a people He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers, mightily proud towards the disbelievers, striving in the way of Allah; and they do not fear the blame of (any) blamer. That is the Grace of Allah (that) He brings to whomever He decides; and Allah is Ever-Embracing, Ever-Knowing.” (TMQ, 2 :54).**

The word «people» confirms the importance of the group unity factor which starts with brotherhood and support of the believers to one another. This is why the first thing the Prophet (SAWS) did when he migrated to Madinah was to begin forming an Islamic community where he made both the people of Madinah and Makkah brothers. This action was the seed for the Islamic society and remains as our model until this day.

Brother for the sake of Allah is the first step to win the love of Allah :

Brotherhood in Allah, which was started by the Prophet (SAWS) in Madinah in order to form the Islamic community, is based on the principle that believers are brothers bonded by what is even stronger than blood. That bond is faith, the love to Allah (SWT) and the Prophet (SAWS). This is, indeed, the family of believers who provide love, comfort and support to one another and for the sake of Allah (SWT).

The Prophet (SAWS) says, «The believers in their compassion, kindness and affection are like a body where if one member complains, the rest of the members strive to provide it with comfort and help. » [Reported by al-Bukhary]

The Prophet (SAWS) also says, «A believer to the one is like a structured wall, holding each other. » And the Prophet put his fingers together. » [Reported by al-Bukhary]

In this brotherhood, believers do not expect anything in return for giving because their relationship is built on loving one another for the sake of Allah and its aim is seeking Allah's love.

Among the seven who are shaded on the day of judgment are two men who met and departed on the love for the sake of Allah. The Prophet (SAWS) says, «The middle ground of faith is to love each other and dislike each other for the sake of Allah.» [Reported by Ahmad]

The Prophet (SAWS) taught us that believers should love another, tell each other «I love you for the sake of Allah» and say in return «May He (Allah) who you love me for His sake love you». An angel says amen to this prayer (of winning the love of Allah) and also says «And the same to you» to the person who made the supplication. Allah (SWT) then rewards them both with His love. For their love is for the sake of Allah and not for money, power or any kind of self-interest. From here we learn that love for one another cause the love of Allah for them. So whoever wants to win the love of Allah, they ought to love their fellow brothers and sisters and to tell them so. Allah (SWT) loves every heart that loves others solely for the sake of Allah. This is true brotherhood and love for the sake of Allah, and it is indeed the first step to win the love of Allah (SWT).

The Prophet (SAWS) taught us how to love one another when he said, «Do you want me to show you one thing which if you do you will love one another ? Wish each other peace upon meeting one another. » [Reported by Muslim]

Wishing each other peace and blessings upon meeting, with thirty rewards, is a sunnah of the Prophet (SAWS) for those who you know as well as others you don't. It is better to be the one who says it first. It is important to return the wish as well.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And when you are greeted with a greeting, then greet a fairer one than it, or give it back again; surely Allah has been Ever-Reckoner over everything.”** (TMQ, 4:86).

It is important to wish each other peace and blessings for it is in fact a supplication of the believers for one another as well as an invitation to spread love and compassion for them. This also strengthens the ties between everyone in society, for it does not differentiate between the poor and the rich, the old and the young, or the weak and the strong ones. This approach gets rid of any trace of prejudice or conceited pride that may differentiate and alienate people from one another for in Islam all people all the same. Nothing differentiates between people in Islam but their piety, not their skin color, their wealth or their power. Wishing each other peace and blessings is a sure way to keep Satan out of our hearts as well.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Surely Ash- Shaytan's (The all-vicious, the Devil) would only (like) to excite enmity and abhorrence among you by means of wine and games of chance, (Literally: in wine and games of chance) and to bar you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer. Will you then be refraining?”** (TMQ, 2 :91).

We can see clearly now the importance of wishing peace and blessings to all as supplicating for the other believers. We must remember when the Prophet (SAWS) said «Don't forget us in your prayers» to Omar (RA). Although the Prophet (SAWS) is higher and closer to Allah than Omar for example, yet that did not stop him from asking Omar to pray for him in order to teach us this lovely habit which ties the hearts of the believers with love and compassion.

Through this habit, believers learn to share their problems, feelings, pains and wishes with each other.

The Prophet (SAWS) says, «Whoever does not care about the matter of the Muslims then he is not from them.»

Summary of those who are loved by Allah

We can summarize the above in directing the efforts of those seeking to win the love of Allah (SWT) that we should all love one another for the sake of Allah (SWT) then strive in uniting the believers on the straight path supporting and helping one another with the Prophet (SAWS) as their role model and the Glorious Qur'an as their guide. This brotherhood then moves with sincerity seeking only Allah's pleasure, relating to one another with truth and patience. Those believers strive with their money and their souls for the sake of Allah, fighting so that Allah's words and faith is the highest all the while knowing that Allah will grant them victory.

Such believers are unafraid of their enemies no matter how large their numbers are and they truly rely on Allah (SWT) for they are the good doers, the pious and the patient. They stay pious, clean and patient at all times. They do not rush what does not come their way and they do not regret what befalls them. They are patient in the face of calamity and they seek Allah (SWT) for guidance and support. They are kind and compassionate to one another and they truly love each other for the sake of Allah. Those are the ones who are loved by Allah (SWT) and they are all taking the Prophet (SAWS) as an example for he is truly the most beloved to Allah.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “in case you (really) love Allah, then closely follow me, (and) Allah will love you and forgive you your guilty (deeds); and Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.” (TMQ, 3 :31).**

This is why following the most beloved of Allah's creatures, the Prophet (SAWS) down the path of Allah's obedience by following his sunnah and his footsteps is indeed the one and only way that leads to winning the love of Allah (SWT).

And Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“Say, “This is my way. I call to Allah with demonstration, I and whoever closely follows me; and All Extolment be to Allah; and in no way am I one of the associators (those who associate other with Allah)”.** (TMQ, :108).

Following the footsteps of the Prophet (SAWS) is the path of those who seek the love of Allah (SWT), yet they also call others to the faith of Allah (SWT) with knowledge, conviction as well as with the true etiquette of giving advice. Such people do not seek to be messengers, nor are they mistaken about their identity, yet they seek to educate others about the mercy and blessings of Allah (SWT) to us all.

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, **“And in no way have We sent you except as a mercy to the worlds.” (TMQ , 21:107).**

Who are those who are not loved by Allah :

In order for our knowledge of Allah to be completed, and after learning about the people who are loved by Allah, it is vital to mention the types of people whom Allah does not love. They are three types :

- 1- People who were mentioned three times in the Qur'an as ones who are not loved by Allah. They are four types :
 - a. The disbelievers
 - b. The unjust
 - c. The transgressors
 - d. Those who are proud and full of themselves
- 2- People who were mentioned twice in the Qur'an as ones who are not loved by Allah. They are two types :
 - a. Those who overspend
 - b. Those who betray
- 3- People who were mentioned once in the Qur'an as ones who are not loved by Allah. They are three types :
 - a. Those who are proud
 - b. Those who are idle
 - c. Those who are corrupt

This is why believers must stay away from the above flaws and seek to have the attributes mentioned earlier which will lead him to win the love of Allah (*SWT*).

We ask Allah (*SWT*) to enable us and our loved ones to reach His love and to enable us to become among those with the attributes he loves, united in a loving and strong Ummah loving each other for the sake of Allah.

Important Advice

If your desire to win the love of Allah is true, then you must remember that winning this love is achieved through supplication and prayer as well as realistic analysis of the current circumstances. We noticed that Allah repeated the mention of His love to the believers 17 times in the Qur'an, the same number of *rak'ah* of the five daily prayers of each day and night. This is why I ask you to always pray to Allah during your prostration in every *rak'ah* that you be among those who are awarded the love of Allah.

We ask Allah The All Merciful to make us among those who learnt about Him, mentioned Him, loved Him and were loved by Him. O Allah do not make us among those who forgot Allah and He made them forget themselves, then forgotten by Him and received his wrath. O Allah do not make us among those who lose Your love or go astray. You are indeed The All Hearing.

More to come...