



NEW MUSLIM ACADEMY

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# **ISLAMIC CREED**

## **NEW MUSLIMS' COURSE**



**“There is no god worthy of  
worship except  
Allaah, and Muhammad is  
His Messenger”**

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

### Objectives:

At the end of this course the student should know:

- The testimony of faith (Shahādah) and its conditions.
- The importance, meaning and categories of Tawheed.
- The dangers of shirk.
- A summary of the Articles of Faith

### Prerequisites:

- Video Recorded lectures

### Recommended Reading/Listening:

- Fundamentals of Tawheed by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips [Interaional Islamic Publishing House]
- Islamic Creed Series by Umar S. al-Ashqar [International Islamic Publishing house]
- Guide to Sound Creed by by Salih al-Fawzān
- A Brief Introduction to the ('Aqīdah of Ahl Assunnah wal Jama'ah by Abdullah al-Athari [International Islamic Publishing House]

## The Importance of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)



### Objectives:

At the end of this unit the student should know:

- The importance, meaning and categories of Tawheed.
- Tawheed ar-Rubūbiyyah (the oneness of Allaah in His Lordship)

### Prerequisites:

- Video Recorded lectures

### Recommended Reading:

- Fundamentals of Tawheed by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips [International Islamic Publishing House]
- Belief in Allaah - What Does it Mean? by Muhammed bin Saleh al-Uthaymīn
- Concise Commentary on Book of Tawheed by Salih al-Fawzān

## Lesson Notes:

### TAWHEED: SECTIONS

Literally Tawheed means to make something one or to call it one. In English when something is made one it is called a “unity.” However, Islamically Tawheed means to believe that Allaah is the one and only God in all of the things that we do to please Him. For example, prayer should only be to Allaah, sacrifice should only be done in Allaah’s name, charity should only be given for Allaah’s pleasure and Jihaad should only be fought for the sake of Allaah’s religion.

### THE SECTIONS OF TAWHEED

The subject of Tawheed has three sections.

- (1) Tawheed ar-Ruboobeeyah: Unity of Lordship.
- (2) Tawheed al-Asmaa was-Sifaat: Unity of Allaah’s Names and Attributes.
- (3) Tawheed al-‘Ebaadah: Unity of Worship.

#### 1. Unity of Lordship

Tawheed ar-Ruboobeeyah means that we accept Allaah as being the only real power in the Universe. He caused all things to exist when there was nothing; thus, He is called al-Khaaliq, the Creator. He is the one who gave all things the power to grow, to move and change, so He is called ar-Rabb Nothing happens except what He allows to happen; thus He is called al-Maalik, The Owner of The Universe.

When someone does evil, we recognize that it was Allaah who gave him a mind to think of evil, a body able to do it, and that it was by Allaah’s permission that he was able to put his bad idea into practice. We should not say that Allaah caused him to evil, because man chooses evil by himself.

Instead, we should say that Allaah gave him the power to be able to think and do evil. He could not have done evil unless Allaah allowed it to happen, and he could not have thought to do evil unless Allaah gave him the ability to do so. But he chose to do evil by himself and Allaah let him to do it.

Allaah controls all that happens, good or bad, When we want to avoid some misfortune or get some good fortune, we should only turn to Allaah and seek his help. If we depend on created things which the common people call good luck charms, (like rabbit's feet and horse shoes) , to bring us good luck, we have destroyed this section of Tawheed by committing the biggest sin possible, known as Shirk. Similarly, if we fear created things which the common people believe will cause bad luck (like spilling salt, black cats crossing our paths, breaking mirrors, etc.) , thinking that we have saved ourselves from bad luck, we have also committed Shirk and destroyed this section of Tawheed.

## 2. Unity of Allaah's Names and Attributes

Tawheed al-Asmaa was-Sifaat means to describe Allaah according to the names and attributes by which He has described himself in the Qur'aan or by those used by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to describe Qur'aan or by those used by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to describe Him. Because Allaah is the Greatest, His names are called al-Asmaa al-Husnaa (The Most Beautiful Names). Allaah said in the Qur'aan:

{اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى}

*"Allaah, there is no God but He. To Him belong the Most Beautiful names."*

Everything which exists has attributes or qualities by which it is known. We learn in science that animals are different from plants due to certain attributes.

Animals can move and the majority of them take care of their young, whereas plants do not have these characteristics.

Similarly, each of Allaah's name describes a certain attribute which only belongs to Him. For example, Allaah calls Himself **al Awwal** The First, which means that before anything was, Allaah was. Nothing existed before Allaah, because Allaah created everything. A student may be called the first in the class or the first in a race, but he can not be the first before everything. Neither Allaah's names nor His attributes are the same as those of His creation. We should not give Allaah the attributes of His creation nor should we give the creation His attributes. Allaah has said in the Qur'aan:

{لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ}

“There is nothing like Him and He sees and hears (all things)”  
In the Bible of the Christians and the Torah of the Jews they have written that Allaah spent the first six days creating the universe then He slept on the seventh. So they take either Saturday or Sunday as a day of rest in which work is looked at as a sin. However, by making Allaah lie humans who tire from work and need rest, they have committed the biggest sin of Shirk. In the Qur'aan Allaah says:

{اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ}

“Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep.”

### 3. Unity of Worship

Tawheed al-'Ebaadah means that we direct all of our prayers only to Allaah, because He is the only one who is able to answer our prayers. Some people say, if you want to complain to the director of schools, you as a student cannot go directly to his office. You should speak to your teacher who will take to the principle, who, in turn, will take your complaint to the director for you. In the same way, it is better to ask someone close to God, like the prophets or saints, to carry your prayers for you. Such a belief makes Allaah like humans who require intermediaries. However, Allaah is different, He hears and knows all things, so there is no need for anyone to carry our prayers to Allaah for us. Allaah has said in the Qur'aan:

{وَقَالَ رَبِّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ}

“And your Lord said, ‘Call on Me (in prayer) and I will answer you.”

Therefore, to pray to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) or other righteous people whom some people call “Saints” hoping that their prayers will reach Allaah and be answered through them is Shirk, the greatest of all sins.

It should be noted that worship in Islaam includes more than just our prayers. If we follow someone who makes Halaal (permissible) what Allaah has made Haraam or vice versa, we are also worshipping them. The proof of that is in a Hadeeth reported by 'Adee ibn Haatim that he heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) recite the verse.

{اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ}

“They have taken their scholars and monks as lords besides Allaah.”



'Adee ibn Haatim said, "We didn't use to worship them." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Did they not make Haraam what Allaah has made Halaal and you all made it Haraam, and they made Halaal what Allaah had made Haraam and you made it Halaal?" He replied, "Certainly." The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said, "That was your worship of them."

## The Testimony of Faith



### Objectives:

At the end of this unit the student should know:

- The importance and conditions of the Shahādah (testimony of faith).
- How one can violate the Shahādah (testimony of faith).

### Prerequisites:

- Video Recorded lectures

### Recommended Reading:

- Conditions of Laa ilaha illa Allaah by Jamaluddin Zarabozo
- Belief in Allaah - What Does it Mean? by Muhammed bin Saleh al-Uthaymīn
- Belief in Allaah by Umar S. al-Ashqar (International Islamic Publishing house)

## Lesson Notes:

### The Testimony of Faith

By Allaah's grace, He has made His religion open to anyone who wishes to enter it. There are virtually no obstacles to becoming a Muslim. In order to embrace Islam, there is no need for clergy, baptisms or special ceremonies. In fact, the act that makes one a Muslim is a simple declaration of one's faith. Thus, one only need state, **"I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah."** Upon stating these sentences, one enters into the beautiful brotherhood/sisterhood of Islam, a brotherhood/sisterhood that stretches from the time of Adam until the last days of this earth.

In this chapter, there shall be a discussion of some of the details concerning the testimony of faith. In addition, there shall be a discussion of other actions that are mentioned in connection with the act of becoming a Muslim. This shall be followed by some laws related to one's state before becoming a Muslim.

### The Testimony of Faith: There is None Worthy of Worship except Allaah

A person becomes a Muslim by testifying to the truth of the statements: There is none worthy of worship except Allaah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. Since this is a testimony or bearing witness to the truth of something, it must be a "public proclamation" (or, in other words, not something hidden within oneself but, instead, conveyed to others). Ibn Abu al-Izz wrote,

***[The Prophet (peace be upon him)] has made it absolutely clear that a person is definitely not a believer if it is claimed that he believes in the Prophet (peace be upon him) but he does not profess it with his tongue, even though he can...***

This profession of the tongue plays a three-fold role. It is first a statement of a fact. One is testifying that he recognizes the truthfulness of that statement of faith. This would be analogous to a person giving testimony in a court of law. All he is really stating is that those are the facts that he believes to be true.

Second, though, it is statement of commitment to that fact. It is an admission by the person that he intends to adhere to the requirements and guidance of what he has testified to. Third, it is a public proclamation that the individual has now joined the fold of Muslims, accepting all of the rights and responsibilities that such implies.

Muslims know that the key to Paradise is the statement, **“There is none worthy of worship except Allaah.”** Yet many Muslims simply rely upon this statement and believe that as long as they have said it, nothing will harm them. Because of this mere verbal statement of the testimony of faith, they think they will be granted Paradise. However, the mere saying of the statement is not sufficient for salvation. In fact, the hypocrites used to say, “I testify that none is worthy of worship except Allaah and...,” yet Allaah describes them as liars and says that they shall abide in the lowest abyss of the Hell-fire. Obviously, there are some conditions for any testimony but in particular for this testimony to be accepted by Allaah there are some particular conditions —and everyone should be extremely concerned over whether his testimony of faith is acceptable to Allaah or not.

The famous Follower Wahb ibn Munabbih was once asked, “Isn’t the statement of, ‘There is none worthy of worship except Allaah,’ the key to Paradise?” He answered, **“Yes, but every key has ridges. If you come with the key that has the right ridges, the door will open for you. Yet if you do not have the right ridges, the door will not open for you.”** These ridges are conditions that differentiate Muslims who will benefit from that statement from those who will not benefit from that statement,

no matter how many times a day they may have made that statement. A study of the verses of the Quran and the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) will show that there are a number of conditions for the soundness of one's testimony of faith. Again, it is important that every Muslim verify that he is meeting these conditions in his own life with respect to his own testimony of faith. The new convert should consider these conditions concerning his testimony of faith. Preferably (but not necessarily), these would have been explained to him before he undertook the declaration of faith.

The first condition is knowledge. One must have the necessary basic understanding of what is meant by the declaration of faith. One must understand what he is affirming and what he is denying in the declaration. This is true for any kind of testimony. When one testifies to something, one must know what it is that he is testifying concerning. Obviously, a testimony about something that one does not have any knowledge of is unacceptable. Allaah says in the Quran, **"Save him who bears witness unto the truth knowingly"** (43:86).

Therefore, the basics of the testimony must be understood by the person testifying to it. If he does not understand, for example, that Allaah is the only one worthy of worship and that all other gods are false gods, then he does not even have the most elementary understanding of what it is he claims to be testifying to. Such a testimony cannot be considered a proper one that is acceptable to Allaah.

The second condition is certainty. This is the opposite of doubt and uncertainty. In Islam, in fact, any kind of doubt concerning anything confirmed in the Quran or the Sunnah is equivalent to disbelief. One must, in his heart, be absolutely certain of the truth of the testimony of faith. One's heart must not be wavering in any way when one testifies to the truth of, **"There is none worthy of worship except Allaah."**

Allaah describes the true believers as those who have belief in Allaah and then their hearts waver not. Allaah says, **“The (true) believers are only those who believe in Allaah and His messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allaah. Such are the sincere”** (49:15).

Similarly, the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said, **“No one meets Allaah with the testimony that there is none worthy of worship but Allaah and I am the Messenger of Allaah, and he has no doubt about that statement, except that he will enter Paradise.”**

On the other hand, Allaah describes the hypocrites as those people whose hearts are wavering. For example, Allaah says, “They alone seek leave of you [not to participate in Jihad] who believe not in Allaah and the Last Day and whose hearts feel doubt, so in their doubt they waver” (9: 45).

The third condition of the testimony of faith is acceptance. If a person has the conditions of knowledge and certainty, this must be followed by acceptance, with the tongue and heart, of whatever that testimony implies. Whoever refuses to accept the testimony of faith with all of its implications, even if he knows that it is true and is certain about its truth, is a disbeliever. This refusal to accept is sometimes due to pride, envy or other reasons. In any case, the testimony is not an acceptable testimony without its unconditional acceptance.

This condition also means that the Muslim believes in whatever is stated in the Quran or stated by the Prophet (peace be upon him), without any right to choose what he wants to believe and what he wants to reject. Allaah says in the Quran, “Do you believe in part of the Book and reject part of it? And what is the reward of those who do so save ignominy in the life of the world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be consigned to the most grievous doom” (2:85). Allaah has also said, “It is not for a believing man or believing woman,

when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger has indeed strayed in plain error" (33:36).

The fourth condition is submission and compliance. This implies the actual physical enactment by deeds. This is one of the main meanings of the word Islam itself, "the submission to the will and commands of Allaah." Allaah commands this in the Quran, "And turn in repentance and in obedience with true Faith to your Lord and submit to Him" (39: 54).

Allaah has made it a condition of faith that one submits to the command of Allaah and His messenger. Allaah says, **"But nay, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you [the Messenger of Allaah] judge of what is in dispute between them and find within themselves no dislike of that which you decide, and submit with full submission"** (4:65).

This does not mean that the true believer never falls into sin. Indeed, true believers do commit sins. But as long as they recognize that what they did is not correct and it is inconsistent with their obligation of submitting to Allaah, then they have not violated the soundness of their testimony.

The fifth condition is truthfulness as opposed to hypocrisy and dishonesty. This means that when one says the testimony of faith, he is saying it honestly, actually meaning it. He is not lying when it comes to his testimony of faith or simply trying to deceive or fool anyone. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "No one bears testimony to there being no one worthy of worship save Allaah, sincerely from his heart, except that Allaah makes the Hell-fire forbidden for him."

The sixth condition is purity or making this testimony of faith solely for the sake of Allaah. One must not do it for any other reason or anyone else's sake. In this manner, the meaning of purity is the opposite of ascribing partners with Allaah. One becomes and remains Muslim solely to serve Allaah, to avoid His anger and punishment and to gain His mercy and reward. Allaah says in the Quran, **"Worship Allaah, making religion pure for him"** (39:2). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said, **"Allaah has forbidden for the Hell-fire anyone who says, 'There is no one worthy of worship except Allaah,' and says so desiring the face [and pleasure] of Allaah."**

The seventh condition is love. That is, the believer loves the testimony of faith, he loves in accordance with the testimony, he loves its implications and requirements and he loves those who act and strive on its basis. This is a necessary condition of the testimony of faith. If a person makes the testimony but does not love it and what it stands for, then, in fact, his faith is not complete. It is not the faith of a true believer. If he has no love for this testimony or if he actually feels hatred for it, he has negated his testimony.

The true believer puts no one as an equal to Allaah in his love. Allaah says in the Quran, **"Yet of mankind are some who take unto themselves (objects of worship which they set as) rivals to Allaah, loving them with a love like (that which is due to) Allaah only. However, those who believe are stauncher in their love of Allaah"** (2:165). Elsewhere Allaah says, **"Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brethren, your wives, your tribe, the wealth you have acquired, merchandise for which you fear that there will be no sale, or dwellings you desire are dearer to you than Allaah and His messenger and striving in His way: then wait till Allaah brings His command to pass. Allaah guides not wrongdoing folk"** (9:24).



An eighth condition is that the person who states the testimony must deny every other object of worship. Although that is clear in the words of the testimony of faith, it does not seem clear to everyone who makes that testimony. Therefore, it needs to be mentioned explicitly.

In soorah al-Baqara, Allaah reminds Muslims of this important aspect of the testimony. The testimony of faith is not merely an affirmation but it is both an affirmation and a negation. Allaah states, **“And he who rejects false deities and believes in Allaah has grasped a firm handhold which will never break”** (2: 256).

The ninth condition is that the Muslim adheres to the testimony of faith until he dies. This is a must if the testimony is to mean anything in the Hereafter. One cannot rest on his laurels of what he may have done in the past. No, indeed, the declaration of faith must be his banner until death. Allaah says in the Quran, **“O believers, observe your duty to Allaah with right observance, and die not save as Muslims [surrendering yourselves to Allaah]”** (3:102).

Finally, the testimony does not have to be in the Arabic language or with specific terms but it must be very clear as to the exact meaning and purport of what the person is saying.

## Faith (Īmān)



### Objectives:

At the end of this unit the student should know:

- The fundamentals of the first 6 pillars of Belief.

### Prerequisites:

- Video Recorded lectures

### Recommended Reading:

- Creed Series by Umar S. al-Ashqar  
(International Islamic Publishing house)
- Guide to Sound Creed by by Salih al-Fawzān
- The Muslim Belief by Muhammed bin Saleh al-Uthaymīn

## Lesson Notes:

### THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

The “articles of faith,” or what general categories a Muslims is supposed to be believe in, have been delineated by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in a famous hadith known as the “Hadith of the Angel Gabriel.” In that hadith, the Angel asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), “What is imaan (belief)?” The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) replied by saying, “It is to believe in Allaah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day and to believe in the divine decree, [both] the good and the evil thereof.”

It is important that every Muslim, including every convert, have at least a basic understanding of each of these articles of faith. Thus, each article shall be discussed separately here.

#### (A) The Belief in Allaah

The Islamic belief in God revolves around a pure, unadulterated monotheism, commonly referred to in Arabic as tawheed. In order to clarify matters, the scholars divided the discussion of tawheed into different branches, each branch covering or explaining one aspect of the complete and correct belief in Allaah. These branches are clearly and directly indicated by the Quran and Sunnah.

A popular way of discussing tawheed is to divide it into three categories. These three categories are tawheed al-ruboobiyah, tawheed al-uloohiyah and tawheed al-asma wa al-sifaat.

**(1) Tawheed al-Ruboobiyah:** In essence, this is belief in the uniqueness of Allaah with respect to His actions. This is the belief in the Oneness of Allaah with respect to His Lordship. He alone is the Lord (al-Rabb). He is One without Partner in His Dominion and His Actions. He is the Only Creator, Owner, Nourisher, Maintainer and Sustainer of this creation. All creation has been created by Him and Him alone.

According to ibn Uthaimen, all of mankind except the most arrogant and haughty accepts and recognizes this aspect of tawheed, namely, that there is no Lord and Creator but the One Lord and Creator. This is so because this belief is ingrained in the nature of mankind. Mankind recognizes and realizes that this creation must have had a Creator. Mankind also realizes that this Creator must only be One. It is clear from numerous verses of the Quran that even the polytheistic Arabs knew and recognized that the true and only Creator was above and beyond the idols that they used to worship. For example, Allaah says in the Quran, "Say: 'Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein? If you know!' They will say: 'It is Allaah's!' Say: 'Will you not then remember?' Say: 'Who is (the) Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the Great Throne?' They will say: 'Allaah.' Say: 'Will you not then fear Allaah (believe in His oneness, obey Him, believe in the Resurrection and Recompense for every good or bad deed)?' Say: 'In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything (i.e. treasures of each and everything)? And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, if you know?' They will say: '(All that belongs) to Allaah.' Say: 'How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth?'" (23:84-89).

However, this belief concerning Allaah also necessitates or implies the following aspects: Everything that occurs in this creation is by the Decree, Permission and Will of Allaah. Sustenance and provisions are from Allaah and Allaah alone. Life and death are in the Hand of Allaah alone. All blessings come from Allaah.

Guidance and misguidance are by the Will and Permission of Allaah. Legislation or prescribing a way of life is the right of Allaah alone. Allaah alone has knowledge of the unseen. No one has any rights over Allaah unless Allaah Himself has laid down such upon Himself.

**(2) Tawheed al-Uloohiyah:** This is the oneness of Allaah with respect to Him being the only one who is an ilaah (God, object of adoration and worship). This is the actualization of tawheed as found in the actions of the humans or servants of Allaah. This is the meaning of the testimony of faith, "There is none worthy of worship except Allaah." This is the reason for which the messengers were sent and the books were revealed. This is the "trial" or test that mankind is facing in this world. Allaah has said, "I have not created jinn and mankind except that they should worship and serve Me" (51:56). Allaah also says, **"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him"** (17:23).

This branch of tawheed is the real goal or essence of the teachings of all of the messengers and prophets. The first type of tawheed, tawheed al-ruboobiyah, is necessary and essential. In reality, there has been very little dispute or controversy over that first type of tawheed. Many people would accept the basic concept that the Lord and Creator is One Lord and Creator only. However, this belief must lead to this second form of tawheed wherein one directs all of his acts of worship towards Allaah and Allaah alone. This is why so many Messengers are quoted in the Quran as telling their people, "O my people, worship Allaah as you have no other God besides Him" (7:59, 65, 85; 11:50, 61, 84; 23:23 and 32).

Many authors have given definitions for this type of tawheed. Al-Qaisi, for example, defined it in the following manner,

This is the knowledge, belief and recognition that Allaah has the position of God over all of His creation. This category of tawheed— which is called tawheed al-uloohiyah or tawheed al-'ibaada— requires that one single out Allaah alone for all acts of worship. It is the singling out of Allaah and the specifying of Him as the object of all acts of worship, external and internal, statements and actions. It is the denial of the worship of anything other than Allaah, whatever that other thing or being might be. It is the negation of any partner with Allaah in any form whatsoever and refusal to turn any act of worship to anyone other than Him.

The concept of worship which must be devoted solely to Allaah covers everything that is beloved and pleasing to Allaah, whether it be acts or statements, both inward or outward, including purity of intention, love, fear, hope, awe, turning to [Him alone], putting one's trust [only in Allaah], seeking aid and assistance, seeking a means of approach...

He goes on to mention many acts of worship, including the obvious ones, such as prayer, prostration, fasting, animal sacrifice, pilgrimage and so forth. All of these must be done solely for the sake of Allaah. They must also be done in the manner that is prescribed by Allaah and that is pleasing to Him. To perform any of these acts for anyone other than Allaah negates and destroys one's fulfillment and implementation of tawheed.

Al-Saadi's definition sheds some further light on this concept. He wrote that tawheed al-uloohiya

Is to know and recognize with knowledge and certainty that Allaah is the only God and the only one truly deserving of worship. [It is also to verify that] the attributes of Godhood and its meaning are not found in any of [Allaah's] creatures.

No one is then deserving of worship except Allaah. If the person recognizes that and recognizes it correctly, he will reserve all of his external and internal acts of servitude and worship for Allaah alone. He will fulfill the external acts of Islam, such as prayer,... Jihad, ordering good and eradicating evil, being dutiful to parents, keeping the ties of kinship, fulfilling the rights of Allaah and the rights of His creatures... He will not have any goal in life other than pleasing His Lord and attaining His rewards. In his affairs, he will be following the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him). His beliefs will be whatever is proven in the Quran and Sunnah. His deeds and actions will be what Allaah and His Messenger legislated. His character and manners will be in imitation of His prophet , in his guidance, behavior and all of his affairs.

This aspect of tawheed comprises both the actions of the heart as well as the deeds of the physical body. There are two aspects in particular that must be combined in the worship of Allaah. Al-Saadi stated,

The spirit and actuality of worship is by the realization of love and submission to Allaah. Complete love and full submission to Allaah is the reality of worship. If the act of worship is missing both or one of those components, it is not truly an act of worship. For the reality of worship is found in submission and yielding to Allaah. And that will only occur if there is complete and full love [for Allaah] which dominates all other expressions of love.

Jaafar Shaikh Idris has aptly described the process that should come about through the correct belief in Allaah and how that should lead to the acts of the heart which are essential aspects of tawheed.

Idris wrote,

When faith enters a person's heart, it causes therein certain mental states, which result in certain apparent actions, both of which are the proof of true faith. Foremost among those mental states is the feeling of gratitude towards God, which could be said to be the essence of Ibadah (worshipping or serving God).

This feeling of gratitude is so important that a nonbeliever is called kaafir which means, "one who denies a truth" and also "one who is ungrateful". One can understand why this is so when one reads in the Quran that the main motive for denying the existence of God is that of unjustified pride. Such a proud person feels that it does not become him to be created or governed by a being whom he must thus acknowledge to be greater than himself and to whom he must be grateful. "Those who dispute concerning the signs of God without any authority come to them, in their hearts is only pride that they shall never attain" (Ghaafir :56).

With the feeling of gratitude goes that of love: "There are some people who take to themselves [for worship] others apart from God loving them as they should love God; But those who believe love God more ardently than they love anything else" (al-Baqara : 165).

A believer loves and is grateful to God for His bounties, but being aware of the fact that his good deeds, whether mental or physical, are far from being commensurate with Divine favors, he is always anxious lest because of his sins God should withhold from him some of these favors or punish him in the Hereafter. He therefore fears Him, surrenders himself to Him, and serves Him with great humility.

There is thus no real worship unless the heart is filled with the feeling of love and glorification for Allaah. Along with this flows the other necessity components of having hope in Allaah and fear of Allaah in the heart. Fear of Allaah comes about when one truly glorifies and exalts Allaah. Hope in Allaah flows from a complete and true love of Allaah. All of these components must be present and in a proper balance. If they are not present at all or if they are not properly balanced, one's worship becomes distorted and incorrect.



Allaah says about some of His true and pious servants, "Verily, they used to hasten to do good deeds. They used to call upon Us with hope and fear. They also would humble themselves before us" (21:90). In reference to the pious and devoted servants Jesus, Uzair and the angels, Allaah has said, "They hope for His mercy and fear His torment" (17:57). This category of tawheed is the key to a "real life", a life that is sound and proper. Ibn Taimiyyah wrote,

You must know that a human's need for Allaah that he worship Him and not associate any partner with Him is a need concerning which there is no comparison that one can make an analogy to. In some matters, it resembles the need of the body for food and drink. However, there are many differences between the two.

The reality of a human being is in his heart and soul. These cannot be prosperous except through [their relation] with Allaah, concerning whom there is no other god. There is [, for example,] no tranquility in this world except in His remembrance. Verily, man is heading toward his Lord and he shall meet Him. He must definitely meet Him. There is no true goodness for him except in meeting Him. If the human experiences any pleasure or happiness other than in Allaah, that joy and happiness will not endure. It will move from one nature to another or from one person to another. The person will enjoy it at one time or only some of the time. In fact, sometimes the thing he enjoys and gets pleasure from does not bring him pleasure or enjoyment. Sometimes it even hurts him when it comes to him. And he is even more harmed by that. But his God is definitely always with him under every circumstance and at all times. Wherever he is, He is with him [by His knowledge and aid]...

If someone worships anything other than Allaah even if he loves it and attains some love in this world and some form of pleasure from that [that false worship] will destroy the person in a way greater than the harmful displeasure that comes to a person who ate poison...

You must know that if anyone loves something other than for the sake of Allaah, then that beloved thing will definitely be a cause of harm and punishment... If somebody loves something other than for the sake of Allaah, that thing will harm him whether it is with him or he is without it...

In order for any deed to be accepted by Allaah, it must be done in accordance with this aspect of tawheed. In other words, if a person is fulfilling and understanding this form of tawheed properly, this, by necessity, implies that he is accepting and applying the other forms of tawheed. Therefore, his deeds may then be accepted by Allaah. Allaah says, "So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and not associate anyone [with Allaah] in the worship of his Lord" (18:110).

One of the acts that must be done solely towards Allaah is prayer or supplication. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has said, "**Supplication is the [essence of] worship.**" When a person prays or supplicates to another, he is showing his trust and reliance in that other. He is demonstrating his need for the one he is praying to. He is demonstrating his trust in that person or being's ability to know, understand and fulfill his need. This kind of feeling in the heart that is reflected in supplication must be directed towards Allaah only. That is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) called supplication the essence of worship. Hence, anyone who prays or supplicates to anyone other than Allaah is associating partners with Allaah or, in other words, committing shirk. This is the antithesis of Imaan and tawheed.

This type of tawheed is actually a necessary consequence or result of the correct belief in tawheed al-ruboobiyah. If one realizes that there is no rabb (Lord) except Allaah, then one will realize that none is worthy or deserving of worship except Allaah. If none other than Allaah is worthy of worship, then why would anyone worship somebody or something other than Allaah?

On this aspect of tawheed, ibn Abu al-Izz al-Hanafi wrote, The Quran abounds with statements and parables concerning this type of tawhid. It first affirms the tawhid al-ruboobiyah, that there is no Creator other than Allaah. This conviction necessitates that no one should be worshipped except Allaah. It takes the first proposition [that Allaah is lord] as evidence for the second proposition [that Allaah is the only one worthy of worship]. The Arabs believed in the first proposition and disputed the second. Allaah then made it clear to them: Since you know that there is no Creator except Allaah, and that He is the One who can give a person what benefits him or keep away from him what harms him, and He has no partner in those acts, then how can you worship others besides Him and associate partners with Him in His Godhead? For example, Allaah says in the Quran, "Say: Praise be to Allaah and peace on His servants whom He has chosen [for His message]. Who is better: God or the false gods they associate with Him? Or who has created the heavens and the earth, and who sends you down rain from the sky with which He brings forth beautiful gardens? It is not in your power to cause the growth of the trees in them. Can there be another god besides Allaah? Yet they are a people who assign equals [to Him]" (al-Naml 59-60). At the end of other similar verses, Allaah states, "Can there be another god besides Allaah?" (al-Naml 61, 62, 63 and 64). This is a question with a clearly implied negative answer. They accepted the notion that no one but Allaah does such things. Allaah used that as a proof against them. It does not mean to ask if there is another god besides Allaah, as some have claimed.

Such a meaning is inconsistent with the context of the verses and the fact that the people actually used to take other gods alongside Allaah. As Allaah says, "Can you possibly bear witness that besides Allaah there is another god? Say: I witness it not" (al-Anaam 19). And they used to say [about the Prophet], "Does he make all the gods one? That it is truly a strange thing" (Saad: 5). But they would never say that there was another god [with Allaah] that would "make the earth a fixed abode, place rivers in its fold, and place firm hills therein" (al-Naml 61). They accepted the fact that only Allaah did all of those things. Therefore Allaah says, "O people, adore your Guardian-Lord who created you and those who went before you that you may learn to be righteous" (al-Baqara 21) and "Say: Think, if Allaah took away your hearing and your sight and sealed up your hearts, who, a god other than Allaah, could restore them to you" (al-Anaam 46). And there are other similar verses. `

**(3) Tawheed al-Asma wa al-Sifaat:** The third aspect of tawheed, in this way of viewing tawheed, is recognizing and affirming the Oneness of Allaah with respect to His names and attributes. One must affirm that these attributes are perfect and complete in Allaah alone. These attributes are unique to Allaah. No one else can attain any of these attributes.

Throughout the history of Islam, this is another aspect of tawheed concerning which many sects deviated. Shuaib al-Arnaut describes the different views that developed in the following passage,

There is no doubt that the topic of Allaah's attributes must be considered as one of the greatest and most important topics of the foundations of faith. The views of the Islamicists have differed on this issue. Some of them followed the approach of complete denial of the attributes. Others accepted Allaah's names in general but denied the attributes.

. Some of them accepted both the names and attributes but, at the same time, rejected or gave interpretations for some of them, turning away from their apparent meanings [of the texts found in the Quran and Sunnah]. Some of them took the approach that it is obligatory to believe in all of the names and attributes that are mentioned in the Book of Allaah and the authentic Sunnah. They took them and passed them on according to their plain, apparent meaning. They deny any understanding of their modality (kaifiyah) and deny any kind of similarity [of those attributes to any other than Allaah]. The people of this last opinion are those who are called the salaf [pious predecessors] and ahl al-Sunnah.

The correct belief concerning this topic that has been passed on from the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions was aptly summarized by al-Saadi when he wrote,

As for belief in Allaah, it includes: belief in whatever attributes Allaah has described Himself with in His book and whatever attributes His Messenger (peace be upon him) has attributed to Him. [The belief in those attributes are] without any distortion or negation, and without stating how or what manner the attributes are. In fact, the belief is that there is nothing similar to Allaah and, at the same time, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. Therefore, what He has attributed to Himself is not denied nor are such descriptions distorted from their proper meanings. In addition, the names of Allaah are neither denied, nor is their manner described, nor are they depicted in a way that makes His attributes similar to the attributes of any of His creation. This is because there is no one and nothing similar or comparable to Him. He has no associate or partner. One cannot make an analogy between Him and His creation, glorified and most High be He.

With respect to belief in what Allaah has been attributed with of attributes and names, there must be a combination of affirmation and negation.

The ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah do not allow any straying from what the Messengers preached, as that is the Straight Path. Included in this very important principle are all the statements from the Quran and the Sunnah detailing Allaah's names, attributes, actions and what should be negated of Him. Included among this is the belief in Allaah's settling Himself over the Throne, His descending to the lowest heaven, the believers seeing Him in the Hereafter— as the confirmed, continuous reports have stated. Also included under this principle is that Allaah is close and responds to the supplications. What is mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah concerning His closeness and "being with" the believers does not contradict what is stated concerning His transcendence and His being above the Creation. For, Glory be to Him, there is nothing at all similar to Him with respect to any of His characteristics.

In one verse, Allaah has pointed out that both nothing is similar to Him whatsoever and, at the same time, He has attributes, such as hearing and seeing. Allaah has stated, "There is nothing similar to Him and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing" (42:11). Hence, there is a complete denial of anthropomorphism while affirming Allaah's attributes of hearing and seeing.

This aspect of tawheed is very important and should not be underestimated. As Ahmad Salaam points out, the people before the coming of the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted the idea of Allaah alone being the only Creator of the Universe. However, they associated partners with Allaah in different forms of worship. Therefore, Islam came to purify this concept of Allaah being the Lord or Rabb and gave it its proper understanding. By doing so, then they would worship Allaah alone properly. But the way to achieve that, or the beginning point, is to have the knowledge and correct understanding of Allaah's names and attributes. If one has knowledge of and a correct understanding of Allaah's names and attributes, then one would never turn to anyone else or direct any form of worship to anyone other than Allaah.

Hence, a correct and detailed understanding of Allaah's names and attributes is truly the foundation for the correct fulfillment of the other types of tawheed. He further states that tawheed al-ruboobiyah is like a tree. Its root, then, is tawheed al-asma wa al-sifaat. In other words, tawheed al-ruboobiyah stands on a foundation, which is tawheed al-asma wa al-sifaat. If that root or foundation is not found, the tree itself may be diseased and weak.

However, given that parable, the real fruit of tawheed al-asma wa al-sifaat, once again, is tawheed al-uloohiyah. The more that one knows about Allaah and His attributes, the more one will love Allaah, fear Allaah and have hope in Allaah. Definitely, the more one knows about Allaah, the more one will love Allaah and desire to please Allaah and have Allaah pleased with him. Hence, the correct understanding of the names and attributes of Allaah is very important and very beneficial. Those people who stray on this issue have harmed themselves greatly and lost a great fortune.

### **(B) Belief in the Angels**

The second article of faith mentioned by the Prophet (peace be upon him) was belief in the angels. Angels are a type of creation of Allaah that is, in general, unseen by man. They have been created from light but they do have forms and bodies. They are servants of Allaah and have no aspect of divinity to them whatsoever. They submit to His command completely and never stray from fulfilling His orders.

Salaam points out that if a person does not believe in angels, he then cannot believe in the coming of revelation to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is because it was an angel, Gabriel, that brought the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, belief in the Quran cannot be confirmed unless one believes in the angels, as a class, and the Angel Gabriel, in particular, who brought that revelation to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

According to ibn Uthameen, proper belief in the angels comprises four matters:

First, one must believe in their existence.

Second, one must believe in them in general but also one must believe in their names that have been explicitly stated in either the Quran or authentic Sunnah. For example, one of the angels is named Jibreel (Gabriel). He was the angel who brought the revelation to the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Third, one must believe in their attributes as stated in the Quran or Sunnah. For example, it is stated in a hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw the Angel Gabriel covering the horizon and he had six hundred wings. This shows that this species of creation is a truly great and marvelous creation of Allaah. It is also demonstrated, such as in this hadith currently being discussed, that an angel can appear in different forms, such as in the form of a human. This also demonstrates Allaah's great power and ability to do whatever He wills.

Fourth, one must believe in the actions that they perform as mentioned in the Quran or authentic hadith. It is stated in the Quran that they worship Allaah and glorify Him. It is also indicated that specific angels have been given specific responsibilities. Jibreel is in charge of the "life of the heart" which is a reference to the revelation that has come from Allaah. Israafeel is responsible for blowing the trumpet that will resurrect the bodies on the Day of Judgment. Hence, he is related to the reviving of life on the Day of Resurrection. Mikaaeel is responsible for the rain and vegetation. These are the "sources" of life on earth. Ibn Uthameen points out that it is perhaps the relationship between these three angels and their "life-giving" responsibilities that led the Prophet (peace be upon him) to open his late-night prayers with the following supplication, "O Allaah, Lord of Jibreel, Mikaaeel and Israafeel, the Originator of the Heavens and the Earth, the Knower of the Unseen and Witnessed, You judge between Your slaves in that wherein they differ, guide me to the truth in the matters concerning which they



have differed, by Your Leave. You guide whom You will to the Straight Path.”

A fifth matter that one must fulfill in his belief in the angels is to have a strong love for them due to their obedience and worship of Allaah. Furthermore, they declare the Oneness of Allaah and fulfill His commands. They also have strong love and loyalty for the true believers in Allaah. They pray to Allaah on behalf of the believers and ask Allaah to forgive them. They support them in both this life and the Hereafter. An important aspect related to belief in the angels is that everyone must believe that he has with him at all times two angels that are recording his deeds. The following verses are in reference to those angels: “[Remember] that the two receivers [recording angels] receive [him], one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he utter, but there is a watcher by him ready [to record it]” (50:17-18).

There are many beneficial results that flow from a proper belief in angels. For example, knowing about the angels allows one to recognize the greatness of Allaah and His Power. This great creation known as angels is an indication of the greatness of their Creator. Additionally, one should thank Allaah for His extreme care and concern for humans. He has created these creatures to support the believers, protect them, record their deeds and other aspects which are beneficial to the believers.

However, a believer’s belief in the angels goes much beyond that. The believer knows that the angels are noble creatures who support and aid whatever is true and just. Therefore, whenever the believer decides to perform a good deed, stand up for the truth and sacrifice for what is right, he knows that there are creatures in this world who are going to support him and help him in his cause, like the angels supported and helped the believers in the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

In fact, such is promised from Allaah, as the following verses from soorah ali-Imraan indicate: "Allaah had helped you at Badr, when you were a contemptible little force; then fear Allaah. Thus may you show your gratitude. Remember when you said to the believers, 'Is it not enough for you that Allaah should help you with three thousand angels (specially) sent down? Indeed, if ye remain firm, and act aright, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, your Lord would help you with five thousand angels making a terrific onslaught' (3:123-125).

The angels even ask for the believer's forgiveness and pray on behalf of the believer. Allaah says in the Quran, "He it is Who sends blessings on you, as do His angels, that He may bring you out from the depths of darkness into light: and He is full of mercy to the believers" (33: 43).

### **(C) Belief in Allaah's Books**

Belief in Allaah's books is the third article of faith mentioned in this hadith. It refers to the revelations that Allaah sent down to His messengers as a mercy and guidance to lead mankind to success in this life and happiness in the Hereafter. In particular, the Quran is the final revelation. It is the uncreated speech of Allaah. Ibn Uthaimen points out that the belief in Allaah's books comprises four aspects:

First, one must believe that those books were truly revealed from Allaah.

Second, one must specifically believe in the books mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah. They are the Quran revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the Taurah revealed to the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), the Injeel revealed to the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) and the Zaboor revealed to the Prophet David (peace be upon him). There is also reference in the Quran to the "pages" of Abraham and Moses.

The books that the Jews and Christians possess today, which they call the Torah, Gospel and Psalms, may contain some of those original revelations but there is no question that they have been distorted. Hence, to believe in the Torah of Moses, for example, does not mean that a Muslim believes in the first five books of the Old Testament. The two are different books although the latter may possess some of what was in the original Taurah.

Third, one must also believe in everything that Allaah has revealed, whether it be in the Quran or in the previous books. That is, for example, if the Quran states something, then the Muslim must believe in it. He has no choice in this matter. If he rejects any statement in it, he has negated his beliefs in the Books of Allaah. Allaah says, "Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and you reject the rest? Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world. And on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment. And Allaah is not unaware of what you do" (2:85).

Fourth, one must act in accord with the unabrogated revelation, which is the Quran. One must be pleased with it and submit to it completely. This is so even if the person does not completely grasp the wisdom behind the command or statement.

All of the previous revelations of Allaah have been abrogated by the final revelation, the Quran. There is no need for any Muslim to turn to the remnants of any of the earlier scriptures. Everything that he needs for his guidance is contained in the Quran and what it points to, such as the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allaah has stated in the Quran, "And to you We have revealed the Scripture in truth, confirming whatever Scripture that came before it, and a watcher and judge over it" (5:48).

Commenting on this verse, ibn Uthaimen says, "It is a ruler over the previous scriptures. Hence, it is not allowed to act in accord with any ruling of the rulings from the previous scriptures unless it is verified and accepted by the Quran."

It is one of the greatest blessings of Allaah that He sent revelations for mankind. These revelations guide man to the purpose for which he was created. This is one of the many aspects of this creation that helps a human being see and recognize the truth. Commenting on this point, Idris wrote,

God created men so that they may serve Him. His being a servant of God constitutes the essence of man. Man cannot therefore attain to his true humanity and acquire peace of mind unless he realizes this aim for which he was created. But how can he do this? God, being merciful and just, has helped him in many ways. He granted him... an originally good nature that is inclined to know and serve its true Lord. He granted him a mind that possesses a moral sense and the ability to reason. He made the whole universe a natural book full of signs that lead a thinking person to God. But to make things more specific and to give him more detailed knowledge of his Lord, and to show him in a more detailed manner how to serve Him, God has been sending down verbal messages through His prophets chosen from among men, ever since the creation of man. Hence, the description of these messages in the Quran as guidance, light, signs, reminders, etc.

In fact, not only did He send revelations for mankind but He also sent specific and different revelations according to the needs and circumstances of different people over time. This is another expression of Allaah's great mercy for mankind. This process continued until the Quran was revealed, containing all the guidance that mankind needs from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) until the Day of Judgment.

Since it is meant to be a guidance for all times until the Day of Resurrection, as opposed to the earlier scriptures, Allaah has protected the Quran from any tampering, mistakes or distortions. Allaah has said, "Verily, it is We who have sent down the Reminder [the Quran] and surely We will guard it [from corruption]" (15:9).

### **(D) Belief in the Messengers**

The next article of faith is belief in Allaah's Messengers. A messenger is any human who was chosen by Allaah to receive revelation from Him and who was commanded to pass that revelation on. The first of the messengers was Noah (Nooh). Every people was sent messengers and these messengers came with the same fundamental teaching:

"And verily, We have sent among every nation a Messenger proclaiming, 'Worship Allaah [alone] and avoid all false deities'" (16:36). The final messenger and prophet is the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allaah has said, "Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger and the Seal of the Prophets" (33:40).

It is important to note that all of these messengers and prophets were simply human beings. They did not have any divine status or attribute. They had no knowledge of the unseen except for that which Allaah revealed to them. Their loftiest attribute is that of being a servant of Allaah. Such is Allaah's description of them in the Quran. Indeed, with respect to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in reference to three of the greatest events in his life, Allaah refers to him as His servant.

Correct belief in the messengers comprises four aspects :

First, one must believe that the message of all of them is the truth from Allaah. If a person today denies any single one of them who is confirmed in the Quran or authentic hadith, then he is in fact denying all of them. Allaah says about the people of Noah,

“The people of Noah belied the messengers” (26:105). However, Noah was the first messenger. This implies that, in essence, if a person denies one messenger, he is in fact denying all of them since their message is essentially one and consistent. Hence, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “By the One in whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, there will be no Jew or Christian of this nation who hears of me and then dies without believing in that with which I have been sent except that he will be one of the inhabitants of the Hell-fire.”

This is one of the aspects that distinguishes Muslims from the earlier peoples. Muslims believe in all of the prophets. However, the others refused some— whether it be the Jews rejecting Jesus (peace be upon him) or the Jews and Christians rejecting the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)— although, in reality, they had no grounds whatsoever to refuse the later prophet. Each messenger came with clear signs and evidence. Their rejection by the people could only be based on arrogance, ignorance or hostility to the truth.

Second, one must believe in all of the Messengers mentioned by name in the Quran or Sunnah. As for those not mentioned, one must believe in them at a general level, knowing that Allaah has sent many messengers although not all of them are mentioned by name in the Quran or hadith. Allaah has stated in the Quran, “And indeed We have sent messengers before you. Of them, some We have related to you their story and some We have not related to you their story” (40:78).

Third, one must believe in everything that they stated. They communicated their messages from Allaah completely and properly. They exerted themselves to propagate Allaah’s message. They strove for the sake of Allaah in the most complete manner. They were most knowledgeable of Allaah and the best worshippers and servants of Allaah.

The messengers “have been protected from attributing to Allaah something of their own invention, judging according to their own desires, falling into major sins, and adding to or diminishing from the religion.”

Fourth, one must submit to, accept and act in accord with the law of the messenger who has been sent for his guidance. Allaah says in the Quran, **“We sent no messenger but to be obeyed by Allaah’s leave”** (4:64). With respect to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Allaah says in the verse after the verse quoted above, “But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept them with full submission” (4:65).

The believer should realize that the sending of messengers for the benefit and guidance of humankind is a great blessing from Allaah. The knowledge that they conveyed is knowledge that is beyond the grasp of the human intellect by itself since it deals with matters of the unseen. Indeed, humankind is in more need of their guidance than they are in need of food and drink. If they are void of food and drink for any period of time, they will die, implying loss of this life. But if they are refusing Allaah’s guidance through the messengers, they will lose the everlasting bounties of the Hereafter.

### **(E) Belief in the Last Day and the Hereafter**

“The Last Day” is called such because there will be no new day after it, as the people of Paradise shall be in their abode as will the people of Hell. Among its other names are “The Day of Resurrection,” “The Reality,” “The Event,” “The Day of Judgment,” and “The Overwhelming.” This is the greatest day that mankind shall pass through. Indeed, it will be the gravest and most fearful day. A person’s new life will be decided on that day. It will mark a new beginning for each and every soul. This new step may lead to eternal bliss or eternal damnation.

Belief in the Last Day implies belief in everything that the Quran or the Prophet (peace be upon him) has stated about the events of that Day and thereafter. There are some general aspects (resurrection, judgment and reward, Paradise and Hell) that every Muslim should be aware of and believe in with certainty. There are also more detailed aspects that the Quran or the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) mentioned. The more one has knowledge of that Day and its surrounding events, the greater the effect this belief will have on him. Hence, it is highly recommended for each individual Muslim to learn about the events that occur prior to and on the Day of Resurrection.

As recorded in Sahih Muslim, before the Day of Judgment and the destruction of this earth, Allaah will send a wind softer than silk, coming from Yemen, that will take the souls of every individual who has even the slightest amount of faith in his heart. Therefore, the events of the end of the earth will only be lived through by the worst of people, those with no faith whatsoever.

One of the first events to occur is the sun rising from the West. At that time, all those people will declare their faith but it will be of no avail to them. Then the Horn shall be blown and all on this earth shall die. Allaah says, "And the trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allaah wills" (39:68). This earth and heaven shall then be destroyed. After a period of forty— it is not known whether it is forty hours, days or years— a second Horn will be blown and the people will be resurrected: "And the Trumpet will be blown [the second blowing] and, behold, from the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord. They will say, 'Woe to us! Who has raised us up from our place of sleep?' [It will be said to them,] 'This is what the Most Beneficent [Allaah] has promised, and the Messengers spoke the truth'" (36:51-52).



According to ibn Uthaimen, belief in the last day encompasses three aspects. First is belief in the Resurrection: after the Second Blowing of the Horn, the people will be resurrected in front of Allaah. They shall be naked, barefoot and uncircumcised. Allaah says, “As We began the first creation, We shall repeat it. [It is] a promise binding on Us. Truly, We shall do it” (21:104).

The resurrection is going to be in the same body that the person had in this worldly life. Ibn Uthaimen has pointed out the wisdom and importance of this: “If it were a new creation, it would mean that the body that performed the sins in this world would be safe from any punishment. To come with a new body and have that body punished goes against what is just. Hence, the texts and rational argument indicate that the [person] resurrected is not a new [creation] but a return [of the old creation].” He also points out that Allaah has the ability to recreate the bodies even after they have disintegrated. Humans may not be able to understand how exactly that is possible— like so many other aspects that humans cannot fathom— but Allaah has stated it and a believer knows full well that it is true and well within Allaah’s ability to do so.

The second aspect is belief in the accounting or reckoning of the deeds and the reward/punishment for those deeds. This aspect is mentioned and stressed in numerous places in the Quran. Here are a couple of examples: “Verily, to Us will be their return. Then, verily, upon Us will be their reckoning” (88:25-26); “And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And sufficient are We as reckoners” (21:47).

Allaah has made it clear that all deeds will be weighed on the Day of Judgment. Allaah says, “And the weighing on that Day will be the true weighing.

So as for those whose scale [of good deeds] will be heavy, they will be the successful. And as for those whose scale will be light, those are they who will lose their own selves because they denied and rejected Our Signs" (7:8-9).

One should always recall that the reward Allaah gives to His servants is an act of His mercy as He rewards them more than what their deeds entail. However, Allaah's punishment is out of His justice and He does not punish anyone more than what he deserves.

The third essential aspect of belief in the Last Day is belief in Heaven and Hell. Heaven is the eternal abode or reward for the believers. Hell is the eternal abode of punishment for the disbelievers. The stronger opinion is that they both are in existence at this present time and they both shall exist forever. They are not simply states of mind as some non-Muslims and a few heretical Muslims believe. Allaah and His Messenger made mention of them and have described them clearly and in unequivocal terms. There is absolutely no room for any Muslim to deny their existence or their descriptions.

About Heaven, for example, Allaah has said, "Verily, those who believe and do righteous deeds, they are the best of creatures. Their reward with their Lord is gardens of eternity, underneath which rivers flow, they will abide therein forever. Allaah being well-pleased with them and they with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord" (98:7-8); **"No person knows what joy is kept hidden for him as a reward for what they used to do"** (32:17).

Concerning Hell, for example, Allaah has said, **"Verily, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them. And if they ask for relief, they will be granted water like boiling oil that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink and evil a resting place"** (18:29);

“Verily, Allaah has cursed the disbelievers and has prepared for them a flaming Fire. They will abide therein forever and they will find neither a protector or a helper. On the Day when their faces would be turned and rolled in all sides of the Fire, they will say, **‘Oh, would that we had obeyed Allaah and obeyed the Messenger’**” (33:64-66).

Ibn Taimiyyah points out that belief in the Last Day also includes belief in everything that shall occur to a person after his death and before the Day of Resurrection. This includes the trial in the grave and the pleasure or punishment in the grave. The trial in the grave is mentioned in an authentic hadith recorded by al-Tirmidhi. It states that two angels, al-Munkar and al-Nakeer, come to the person and ask him: What did you use to say about this man [meaning the Prophet (peace be upon him)]? Other narrations mention two angels coming and asking three questions: Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your prophet?

There are additional detailed aspects related to the Hereafter that a believer should learn about and believe in. Due to space limitations, they cannot be discussed in detail here. These matters include: (1) The Fount or Cistern of the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) ; (2) The different intercessions ; (3) The distribution of the books of deeds; (4) Passing over the siraat (bridge) over Hell ; and (5) The entrance into Paradise and Hell with all of its related aspects.

The belief in and knowledge of the great events of the Last Day and the Hereafter should have some very profound effects on the individual— if he takes the time to remember and seriously think about that Day.

First, it should make the believer rush to perform good deeds, knowing the reward that may be in store for them.

The bounties of Paradise are greater than what any eye has seen or even what any mind could imagine. First and foremost, this great reward includes the pleasure of Allaah and the opportunity to see Him in the Hereafter. If a person could possibly be conscious of this aspect at every moment of his life, he would be anxiously seeking and searching for any good deed he could perform.

Second, the threat of punishment should sway the person from committing any sin, no matter how "light". No sin performed in this world could be worth the punishment it could bring about in the Hereafter. Furthermore, by committing sins, the person may also be earning the displeasure of Allaah, his Lord, Creator and Beloved.

Third, according to ibn Uthaimen, the reckoning and justice of the Day of Judgment should bring comfort and solace to the heart of the believer. It is normal for humans to have a hatred for injustice. In this world, it appears to occur often. Those who cheat and who are unethical many times get ahead in this world without ever suffering for what they have done. However, that is only because, on a grand scale, this world is not the final place for judgment, reward and punishment.

They will not escape the evil that they are doing. The good deeds of a person will also not be in vain, as they sometimes seem to be in this world. The time will come for all those matters to be settled and to be settled in a just manner. And that time is the Day of Judgment.

### **(F) The Belief in Divine Decree**

The next and final article of faith mentioned by the Prophet (peace be upon him) is belief in "divine decree" or al-Qadar. Idris discusses the meaning of this word and states,

The original meaning of the word Qadar is specified measure or amount, whether of quantities or qualities. It has many other usages which branch out from this core.

. Thus yuqad-dir means, among other things, to measure or decide the quantity, quality, position, etc., of something before you actually make it. And it is this latter sense which interests us here.

It is obligatory upon every Muslim to believe in the concept of Qadar or Divine Decree, as it is clearly referred to in numerous authentic hadith.

Ibn al-Qayyim shows that there are four “levels” or aspects of belief in Qadar. If one does not believe in these four aspects, he does not have the correct or proper belief in Allaah.

The first level is belief in Allaah’s knowledge of everything, both of universals and particulars, before its existence. This is related to both, what is sometimes referred to as, the actions of Allaah, such as producing rain, giving life and so forth, as well as the actions of human beings. Allaah has foreknowledge of all of the deeds of the creation according to His ever-existing knowledge that He is described as having eternally. This includes His knowledge of all their affairs with respect to obedience, disobedience, sustenance and life-spans.

This aspect can be concluded from many Quranic verses, including: **“And with Him are the keys of the Unseen. None knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but he knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record”** (6:59).

The second level of belief in Qadar is belief in Allaah’s recording of all things before He created the heavens and the earth. Hence, Allaah not only knew and knows what will happen, but Allaah has also recorded this information in the Preserved Table (al-Lauh al-Mahfoodh). Such an act is not difficult for Allaah whatsoever. Allaah says, **“Don’t you know that Allaah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Verily, it is all in the Book. Verily, that is easy for Allaah”** (22:70).

Allaah also says, **“No calamity occurs on the earth or among yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book [of Decrees] before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allaah”** (57:22).

The third level is to believe in Allaah’s decreeing of everything that is in existence, and if He does not will something, it can never come into existence. Once again, this also refers to all things. It refers to Allaah’s actions of giving life, sustenance and so forth; and it also includes all of the acts performed by human beings. Nothing can be done unless Allaah decrees it and allows it to occur. A person may intend or try, for example, to shoot and kill another person but such can only occur if Allaah decrees it. The person may take all the necessary steps but if Allaah does not will it to occur, it will not occur. In the case just mentioned, Allaah may will the gun to jam or the shooter’s hand to flinch and miss his target and so forth.

This aspect of Qadar may also be concluded from numerous pieces of evidence. For example, Allaah says, **“If Allaah had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought against each other, after clear verses of Allaah had come to them. But they differed, some of them believing and others disbelieving. If Allaah had willed, they would not have fought against one another, but Allaah does what He likes”** (2:253). Allaah also says, **“Verily, this [the Quran] is no less than a Reminder to (all) the ‘Alamin (mankind and jinn). To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight. And you cannot will unless (it be) that Allaah wills the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)”** (81:27-29).

Ibn Uthaimen also offers a rational argument for this aspect of belief in Qadar. He says that it must be accepted that Allaah is the Owner, Master and Controller of this creation. Hence, it cannot be the case, as long as everything is under His Control and part of His Dominion, that something occurs in His Dominion that He does not want to happen.

Therefore, everything that occurs in His creation is by His Will. Nothing could ever occur unless He willed it. Otherwise, His control and mastery over His dominion would be deficient and lacking, as things would be occurring in His dominion that either He did not will to occur or they occurred without His knowledge. These hypotheses are unacceptable.

The fourth level of belief in Qadar is the belief in Allaah's creating of everything, bringing of everything into existence and making everything be. This aspect is also demonstrated by numerous verses in the Quran, including: "Blessed be He who sent down the Criterion to His slave [Muhammad] that he may be a warner to the Worlds. He to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and who has begotten no offspring and for whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements" (25:1-2). Also, "**Allaah has created everything**" (39:62). Another verse states, "**Verily, We created all things with Divine Pre-ordainment**" (54:49).

Ibn Uthaimen has explained this point by saying, Everything is a creation of Allaah. Even the deeds of mankind are creations of Allaah. Although they are by [man's] free choice and will, they are creations of Allaah. This is because every act of a human is the result of two aspects: a definitive will [to do the act] and the complete ability [to do the act]. For example, suppose that in front of you is a stone weighing twenty pounds. I say to you, "Lift this stone," and you say, "I don't want to lift it." In this case, your lack of will has prevented you from lifting the stone. If I said a second time to you, "Lift that stone," and you said, "Yes, I will listen and do what you have said." In this case, if you wanted to lift it but you were not capable of lifting it, you would not have lifted it because you did not have the capability to do so. If I said to you a third time, "Lift that stone," and you complied and lifted it above your head,

that was because you had the ability and the will to do it.

All of our deeds that we perform, therefore, are the result of a definitive will and complete ability. The one who created that ability and will is Allaah. If Allaah had made you paralyzed, you would not have the ability. If you turned your attention to some other deed, you would not have done it...

Therefore, we say: All of the actions of humans are created by Allaah. This is because they are the result of definitive will and complete ability. The one who created that will and ability is Allaah. The way in which Allaah is the creator of that will and capability is that the will and ability are two characteristics of the one who wants something and the one who has ability but the one who created that person with that ability was Allaah. The One who created the person who has specific characteristics is also the one who created those characteristics. This makes the matter clear and shows that the actions of human beings are the creation of Allaah.

Actually, there are a number of questions and misconceptions that have arisen surrounding the concept of Qadar. Due to space limitations, they cannot be dealt with in detail here. However, in a not-too-lengthy passage, Jaafar Sheikh Idris has adequately dealt with a number of such issues. He wrote,

God decided to create man as a free agent, but He knows (and how can He not know?) before creating every man how he is going to use his free will; what, for example, his reaction would be when a Prophet clarifies God's message to him... "But if we are free to use our will," a Qadari might say, "we may use it in ways that contradict God's will, and in that case we would not be right in claiming that everything is willed or decreed by God." The Quran answers this question by reminding us that it was God who willed that we shall be willful, and it is He who allows us to use our will. [He then quotes surah al-Insan 29-30.]



"If so," says a Qadari, "He could have prevented us from doing evil." Yes, indeed he could, "Had God willed, He would have brought them all together to the guidance" (6:35) And Allaah says "if thy Lord had willed whoever is in the earth would have believed, all of them, all together" [10:99]... But He had willed that men shall be free especially in regard to matters of belief and disbelief. "Say: 'The truth is from your Lord; so let whosoever will believe, and let whosoever will disbelieve'" [18:29]...

"If our actions are willed by God," someone might say, "then they are in fact His actions." This objection is based on a confusion. God wills what we will in the sense of granting us the will to choose and enabling us to execute that will, i.e., He creates all that makes it possible for us to do it. He does not will it in the sense of doing it, otherwise it would be quite in order to say, when we drink or eat or sleep for instance, that God performed these actions. God creates them, He does not do or perform them. Another objection, based on another confusion, is that if God allows us to do evil, then He approves of it and likes it. But to will something in the sense of allowing a person to do it is one thing; and to approve of his action and commend it is quite another...

In the Hadith of the Angel Gabriel, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) explicitly stated that one must believe in divine decree, "[both] the good and the evil thereof." Ibn al-Qayyim points out that what is meant by "evil" is with respect to the human beings and not with respect to Allaah. The "evil" is the result of the human's act of ignorance, wrong, oppression and sin. However, it was allowed and brought into being by Allaah. But no evil is to be attributed to Allaah because, with respect to Allaah, the act is good and full of wisdom, as it must be a result of Allaah's knowledge and wisdom. Any act of that nature must, in its essence, be good and cannot be pure evil. This is supported by the Prophet's hadith, "Evil is not to be attributed to You." That is because every act that occurs is the result of some wisdom and goodness and can never be pure evil.

The individual himself may think it otherwise, but in reality there is wisdom and good in everything that occurs in Allaah's creation. Ibn Uthaimen gives an example illustrating this point. Allaah says in the Quran, "Evil has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned, that Allaah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return [by repenting]" (30:41). In this verse, Allaah states the evil (fasaad) that has appeared, the cause for it and its result. The evil (fasaad) and the cause of it are both evil (sharr). However, the goal of it is good: that Allaah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return [by repenting]. Hence, there is a wisdom and a goal behind that fasaad. This goal and wisdom makes the entire action something good and not a pure evil.

Pure evil, on the other hand, would be one in which there was no benefit or positive result related to it. Allaah's wisdom and knowledge preclude the existence of acts of that nature.

### **The Fruits of Proper Belief in Divine Decree**

(1) When a person realizes that all things are under the control and decree of Allaah, he is freeing his belief from any form of shirk or associating partners with Allaah in His Lordship. There is truly only One Creator and Master of this creation. Nothing occurs except by His will and permission. When this is firmly in the heart of the person, he then also realizes that there is none worthy of praying to, seeking assistance from, relying upon, and so forth, except that one Lord. Hence, he directs all of his acts of worship toward that One who has decreed and determined all matters. Thus, both tawheed al-ruboobiyah and tawheed al-uloohiyah are correctly and completely fulfilled with the proper belief in al-Qadar.

(2) A person will put one's reliance upon Allaah. A person should follow the outward "causes and effects" that one sees in this world. However, he must realize that those "causes and effects" will not bring about any ends unless Allaah so wills them to do so. Hence, a believer never puts his complete trust and reliance upon his own actions or the worldly aspects that he might have some control over. Instead, he follows whatever causes he may know of which lead to a desired end and then he puts his trust in Allaah to bring about that desired end.

(3) Ibn Uthaimen argues that with proper belief in al-Qadar, one does not become arrogant and boastful. If he achieves any goal that he desired, he knows that such goal only came about because Allaah, in His mercy, had decreed it for him. If Allaah had so wished, He could have put many obstacles in his way and prevented him from reaching his goal. Therefore, instead of becoming full of himself and arrogant upon reaching his goal, the person who truly believes in al-Qadar becomes very thankful to Allaah for bringing about that blessing.

(4) The proper belief in al-Qadar brings about tranquility and peace of mind. The person realizes that everything that occurs is according to Allaah's Divine Decree. Furthermore, there is a wisdom behind everything Allaah does. Hence, if the person loses a beloved or something of this world, he does not go insane, despair or give up hope. Instead, he realizes that such was the will of Allaah that he must accept. He must also realize that such has occurred for a purpose. It did not occur haphazardly or accidentally, without any reason behind it. Allaah has said, "No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book [of Decrees] before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allaah. In order that you may not be sad over matters that you fail to achieve, nor rejoice because of that which has been given to you. And Allaah likes not prideful boasters" (57:22-23).

(5) Belief in al-Qadar gives a person strength and courage. He knows that Allaah has recorded his life and his sustenance for him. Such comes only from Allaah and is already decreed. Hence, he need not fear struggling and fighting for the sake of Allaah as the time of his death is already recorded. He need not fear anyone when it comes to his sustenance and provision as such come only from Allaah and have been already recorded for him. No human can cut off his sustenance and livelihood if Allaah has decreed that he shall continue to receive provisions and sustenance from some source.

### Conclusions

This chapter has provided a brief synopsis of the basic beliefs of a Muslim. Every Muslim must know what he is supposed to believe in, at least at an elementary level. However, as his knowledge of the articles of faith increases, his faith itself will become stronger and greater. For more details about the articles of faith, the author would like to recommend Umar al-Ashqar's eight part series that touch upon the various aspects of faith, such as belief in Allaah, the angels and so forth. These books are published by the International Islamic Publishing House in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and are easily available via the internet. The books of Bilal Philips and Muhammad Jibaly on aspects of belief are also well worth reading for the new Muslim.

## Shirk

# 4

## LESSON

### Objectives:

At the end of this unit the student should know:

- What is meant by Shirk.
- The categories of Shirk.

### Prerequisites:

- Video Recorded lectures

### Recommended Reading:

- A Critical Study of Shirk by Yasir Qadhi
- Belief in Allaah - What Does it Mean? by Muhammed bin Saleh al-Uthaymīn
- Belief in Allaah by Umar S. al-Ashqar (International Islamic Publishing house)

## Lesson Notes:

### SHIRK:

Tawheed cannot be completely understood unless its opposite, Shirk, is also carefully studied. The sin of Shirk denies the very purpose of man's creation, and is to Allaah the greatest of sins :

**“Surely Allaah will not forgive the association of partners (Shirk) with Him, but He forgives (sins) less than that of whomever He wishes.”**

Soorah an-Nisaa' (4) : 148

Shirk literally means partnership, sharing or associating, but Islamically it refers to assigning partners to Allaah in whatever form it may take. For one's Tawheed to be correct and pure, all forms of Shirk must be erased from one's beliefs and practices. This is why the declaration of faith consists of two parts : One negates false gods and Shirk, and the other confirms the uniqueness of Allaah. Laa ilaaha denies that anyone or anything deserves worship, and il-laal-laah restricts worship to Allaah alone. Together they complete the declaration of belief in Tawheed.

### THE CATEGORIES OF SHIRK

The following analysis of Shirk is according to the three broad categories developed in the study of Tawheed in Book . we will first look at the main ways in which Shirk can occur in the area of Ruboobeeyah (Lordship), then al-Asmaa' was-Sifaat (Divine Names and Attributes), and finally in 'Ebaadah (Worship).

### SHIRK IN TAWHEED AR-RUBOUBEYAH

This category of Shirk includes both the belief that others share Allaah's control and rule over the creation, as well as the belief that there exists no Lord over the creation at all.

Thus, this form of Shirk may be divided into two main categories :

### **(A) Shirk by Association:**

This is the form of Shirk in which people believe in most of God's qualities and powers, but they believe that God has parts. God is recognized as the creator and sustainer of the universe and His powers and knowledge are believed to be limitless, but He Himself is considered to be divisible.

For example, though most Christians say they believe in One God, they also say He is Trinity. They say He is made up of three units, all separate, yet supposedly equal : God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit.

Hindus also believe in One God called Brahman, but they, too, believe that He takes three forms : Brahma the creator-god, Vishnu the preserver-god and Shiva the destroyer-god.

According to Tawheed, God is one in all senses. He is a special One which cannot be divided like the ones in His creation. He is a perfect One and nothing can be one like Him.

Another example of this type of Shirk which occurs today is that of those who pray to the dead. They believe that the souls of righteous humans can continue to affect the affairs of this world, even after their deaths. Their souls, it is believed, can fulfill human needs, remove calamities and aid whoever calls on them. Therefore, grave worshippers give human souls the divine ability to cause or change events in this life, which in fact only Allaah can do. This belief of theirs means that others share Allaah's rule over creation. The correct Islamic belief is that the dead have no power to affect the lives of the living. Prophet Muhammad (?) was reported to have said, "When a man dies, his acts come to an end, except in the case of three : an ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a pious child who prays for him."

### **(B) Shirk by Negation:**

In this form of Shirk, Allaah's existence is completely denied. An ancient example is that of the Pharaoh of Prophet Moses' time. God mentioned in the Qur'aan that he negated the existence of God and claimed to Moses and the people of Egypt that he, Pharaoh, was the only true lord of all creation. God quoted him as saying to Moses, "If you choose a god besides me, I will surely imprison you" and to the people he proclaimed, "I am your Lord, the Most High."

Another example of this form of Shirk is the belief of some philosophers that the world is eternal, without beginning or end. They attempt to escape the questions surrounding the beginning to escape the questions surrounding the beginning of man's creation and that of the universe by claiming that there was none. To support this claim, they invented theories which gave Allaah's attributes of being without beginning and end to matter which He has created. Present-day holders of this belief are the communists, as well as some scientists who claim that matter has no beginning and everything is a product of matter, including the human mind and life itself.

### **SHIRK IN TAWHEED AL-ASMAA' WAS-SIFAAT**

This category of Shirk includes both the belief that God is like a man and the belief that man is like God. This form can also be subdivided into two categories with regard to in the area of God's names and attributes :

#### **(A) Shirk my Humanization:**

In this form of Shirk, God is given the form and qualities of human beings. Paintings or statues are made of Him in which He is given the shape of a man.



The Hindus and Buddhists worship idols in the likeness of men and call them God. Similarly, many Christian churches have pictures and statues of a human being, Jesus Christ, which they claim represents God. Because they believe that God looks like a man, they also attributed to Him human weaknesses. In the Bible it is claimed that God took a rest after spending six days to create the world. Elsewhere God is spoken of as repenting for His bad thoughts as humans do when they realize their errors. However, in the Qur'aan, Allaah teaches man that He is unlike any thing :

**“There is nothing like Him, yet He hears and sees all things.”**

Soorah ash-Shooraa (42) : 11

**(B) Shirk by Deification:**

This form of Shirk happens when created beings or things are given Allaah's names or attributes. It was the practice of the ancient Arabs to worship idols whose names were derived from the names of Allaah. Their three main idols were al-Laat, taken from Allaah's name al-Elaah; al-'Uzza, taken from al-'Azeex ; and al-Manaat, taken from al-Manaan. There was also in the area of Arabia called Yamaamah a false prophet who took the name Rahman, which only belongs to Allaah. Einstein's Theory of Relativity ( $E = mc^2$ , energy is equal to mass times the square of the speed of light) taught in all schools is in fact an expression of Shirk in al-Aasmaa' was-Sifaat. The theory states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, it merely transforms into matter and vice versa. However, both matter and energy are created entities and they both will be destroyed, as Allaah clearly states :

**“Allaah is the Creator of all things....”**

Soorah az-Zumar (39) : 62

**“Everything in the world will perish....”**

Soorah ar-Rahmaan (55) : 26

The theory also implies that mass and energy are eternal, having no beginning or end, since they are supposed to be uncreated and transform into each other. However, this attribute belongs only to Allaah, Who alone is without beginning or end.

The Christian belief that Prophet 'Eesaa (Jesus) was God can also be considered Shirk by deification. Jesus was a man and a prophet of Allaah. His birth without a father was miraculous, but so was Eve's birth without a mother and Aadam's birth without a father or a mother.

### **SHIRK IN TAWHEED AL-'EBAADAH**

This category of Shirk refers to the act of worshipping others along with Allaah. In this category, worship which belongs only to Allaah is shared with others. Like the other categories, it can also be divided into two major sections :

#### **(A) Ash-Shirk Al-Akbar (Major Shirk):**

When any form of worship is performed for others besides Allaah, it is the form known as "ash-Shirk al-Akbar" (Major Shirk). It represents the most obvious form of idolatry which the prophets were specifically sent by Allaah to call the masses of mankind away from and to establish Tawheed al-'Ebaadah in its place. Allaah's stated this in the Qur'aan as follows :

**"Surely we have sent to every nation a messenger saying,  
"Worship Allaah and avoid Taaghoot (false gods)."**

Soorah an-Nahl (16) : 36

Taaqhoot actually means anything which is worshipped along with Allaah or instead of Allaah. For example, love, in its perfection, is a form of worship which should only be directed to Allaah.

In Islaam, the love of Allaah is expressed by total obedience to Him. The kind of love which is worship is not the type of love which man naturally feels towards creation, such as parents, children, food, etc. To direct that natural type of love towards Allaah is to lower Him to the level of His creation, which is Shirk in al-Asmaa' was-Sifaat. Love which is worship is the total surrender of one's will. Consequently, Allaah told the Prophet (?) to tell the believers,

**“Say : If you love Allaah, follow me and Allaah will love you.”**

Soorah Aal-'Imraan (3) : 31

The Prophet (?)also told his companions, “None of you is a true believer until I become more beloved to him than his child, his father and the whole of mankind.” Love of the Prophet (?)is not based on his humanity, but on the divine origin of his message. Thus, like the love of Allaah, it is also expressed by total obedience to his commands. Allaah said in the Qur'aan,

**“Whoever obeys the Messenger obeys Allaah”**

Soorah an-Nisaa' (4) : 80 and

**“Say : Obey Allaah and obey the Prophet...”**

Soorah Aal-'Imraan (3) : 32

If man allows anything or anyone to come between himself and Allaah, then he has worshipped that thing. In this way, money can become one's god, or even one's desires could become a god. The Prophet (?) said, “The worshipper of the Dirham will always be miserable.” Allaah said in the Qur'aan,

**“Have you not seen the one who takes his desires as his god?”**

Soorah al-Furqaan (25) : 43

The reason why so much emphasis has been placed on Shirk in ‘Ebaadah (worship) is because it contradicts the very purpose of creation as expressed in Allaah’s statement :

**“I have not created the Jinn and mankind except for My worship.”**

Soorah adh-Dhariyaat (51) : 56

This form of Shirk represents the greatest act of rebellion against the Lord of the Universe and is thus the ultimate sin. It is a sin so great that it virtually cancels out all good a person may do and guarantees him a place in the Hell-fire.

### **(B) Ash-Shirk Al-Asghar (Minor Shirk):**

Mahmood ibn Lubayd reported that Allaah’s Messenger said, “The thing I fear for you the most is ash-Shirk al-Asqhar (Minor Shirk).” The Companions asked, “O Messenger of Allaah, what is Minor Shirk?” He replied, “**ar-Riyaa**” (showing off), for verily Allaah will say on the Day of Resurrection when people are receiving their rewards, ‘Go to those for whom you were showing off in the material world and see if you can find any reward from them.’”

Riyaa’ is the practice of performing any of the various forms of worship in order to be seen and praised by people. This sin destroys all the benefits that lie in righteous deeds and brings on the one who commits it a severe punishment.

It is a part of human nature to love leadership and praise. Doing religious acts to impress people in order to be praised by them is therefore a most fearful evil.

This danger becomes really significant to Muslims since their goal is to make all of the acts of their lives acts of worship. In fact, the likelihood that true believers would commit ash-Shirk al-Akbar is small, since its pitfalls are so obvious. But, for the true Believer, the chance of committing Riyaa' is great because it is so hidden. Ibn 'Abbaas alluded to this fact when he said, "Shirk in the Muslim nation is more hidden than a black ant creeping on a black stone in the middle of a moonless night." It only involves the simple act of changing one's intention. Also, the motivating forces behind it are very strong since it comes from man's inner nature.

Thus, great care has to be taken to ensure that one's intentions begin pure and remain pure whenever righteous deeds are being done. This is why the saying of Allaah's name has been enjoined before all acts of importance. A series of Du'aas have also been prescribed before and after all natural habits like eating, drinking, sleeping, and even going to the toilet, in order to turn these everyday habits into acts of worship and develop in the Muslim a keen awareness of Allaah. It is this awareness, called Taqwaa, which ensures that intentions remain pure.

The Prophet also provided protection against the inevitable acts of Shirk by teaching certain specific prayers which may be said anytime. Abu Moosaa said, "One day Allaah's Messenger delivered a sermon saying, 'O people, fear Shirk, for it is more hidden than the creeping of an ant.' Those whom Allaah wished asked, 'And how do we avoid it when it is more hidden than the creeping of an ant, O Messenger of Allaah?' He replied, 'Say.

**(Allaahumma innaa na'oodhu bika an nushrika bika shay'an na'lamuh, wa nastaqhfiruka limaa laa na'lamuh).**

**O Allaah, we seek refuge in you from knowingly committing Shirk with you, and we ask your forgiveness for what we do not know about."**

### **The Goals Of Islamic Creed ('Aqīdah)**

A person's goals are the destination that he wishes to reach by taking certain actions. The Islamic 'Aqīdah (creed) has goals and values that are the destination of whoever preserves it:

1 - Seeking the Pleasure of Allaah and worshipping Him alone. Allaah is the Creator who has no partners. Therefore, He alone must be worshipped and His Pleasure must be intended by every action one takes.

2 - Freeing the mind from the confusion caused by not following this 'Aqīdah.

3 - Gaining psychological and intellectual satisfaction. The ones who believe in this 'Aqīdah do not fall victim to psychological complexes or confusion. This 'Aqīdah builds a direct and strong relationship between the Lord and His slave. The believer accepts Allaah as the Lord, the Legislator and The King. He is satisfied with this belief. His heart is pleased with the following of Islam and he would not exchange this pleasure for anything else.

4 - Purifying one's intentions and deeds. This 'Aqīdah protects one from falling into misguidance in acts of Worship or in dealings with others. It requires its followers to follow the path set by the Messengers. This path leads to Safety and Purity in the hearts and actions.

5 - Being serious with regards to all matters. One does not pass the chance to do righteous, good deeds, but he takes any chance to gain Allaah's rewards. One is always on his guard against any path that leads to sin, fearing Allaah's punishment. This 'Aqīdah requires its followers to believe in the Resurrection and the Day of Reckoning, "(For all there will be degrees (or ranks) according to what they did. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do" [6:132].

The Prophet also encouraged this attitude, "The strong believer is better and more liked by Allaah than the weak believer. However, each one of them has (a certain degree of ) goodness. Seek what brings benefit to you and depend on Allaah. Do not be weak if any calamity befalls you, do not say: 'Had I done that, then this would not have happened.' Only say: 'Allaah has ordained (this matter) and whatever He will He does.'" "Had I," opens the door wide for the Devil to do his work" [Muslim]

6 - Establishing a strong nation that strives to preserve its religion and solidify its gains. This nation disregards the losses it incurs while striving to preserve the religion. Allaah said, what translated means, "Only those are the believers who have believed in Allaah and His Messenger, and afterwards doubt not but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allaah. Those! They are the truthful" [49:15].

7 - Reaching happiness in this life and in the Last Life, by leading individuals and groups to guidance and gaining their Lord's bounties and good rewards, "Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (in Allaah) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (Paradise in the Hereafter)." [16:97].

These are some of the goals that Islam seeks for its followers to reach. We pray that Allaah helps us and the rest of Muslims to reach them.