Lā Ilāha Ill-Allāh

Its Meaning, Conditions, Nullifiers, Virtues, and Syntactic Analysis

By Shaykh Muhammad Rasālān

REVISED SECOND EDITION
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By Shaykh Muḥammad Raslān

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# Transliteration Table

## Consonants

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## Glyphs

- **Ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam** (May Allāh’s praise & salutations be upon him)
- **ʿAlayhis-salām** (Peace be upon him)
- **ʿAlayhim as-salām** (Peace be upon them)
- **Radīyallāhu ‘anhu** (May Allāh be pleased with him)
- **Radīyallāhu ‘anhumā** (May Allāh be pleased with them both)
- **Raḥimahullāh** (May Allāh have mercy on him)
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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allāh. We thank Him, seek His assistance, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own souls and from our wicked deeds. None can guide whomever Allāh allows to go astray and none can mislead whomever Allāh guides. I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, without partners, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger. Allāh says:

"Ya 'Alīyāhā lā hawā a'tqawā lā lā hawā a'tqawā lā hawā..."  
O you who believe! Fear Allāh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except as a Muslim [in a state of Islām (with complete submission to Allāh)].

[Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān 3:102]

Allāh says:

"Ya 'Alīyāhā lā hawā rakkum lā hawā hulqum min nafs..."
O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwā' (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allāh through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the kinship.

Surely, Allāh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:1]

Allāh says:

وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَحْتُمُّونَ ْنَبِيًّا كَبِيرًا وَنَسَأَءَ

Yā ʾalīya l-lānīn āmnīna aṭtāqwā l-lāh wāqūlūna qūlū l-sādiqā

Yā Abīyā l-ʿāmmā ʿallākum wāqūrī l-kām ʿāmmūn bāsībīkum wāmn yubāl l-lāh

O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ, he has indeed achieved a great achievement.

[Sūrah al-Ahzāb 33:70-71]

To proceed:

The most truthful speech is the Book of Allāh (the Qur'ān) and the best of guidance is that of Muḥammad ﷺ; the worst of evils are the newly invented matters (in religion), and every innovated matter (in Islām) is a bid'ah and every bid'ah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire.

Allāh says:
And I (Allāh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me.

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56]

The essence of worship is obeying Allāh by complying with His commands and refraining from His prohibitions as expounded by His messengers. Thus, worship can be defined as: A comprehensive term that covers everything Allāh loves and accepts from inward and outward deeds and sayings. This is the essence of the Islamic religion because it proclaims submission to Allāh, which implies the utmost degree of humbleness, subjection, and compliance.

Since Allāh ordered that He be worshiped, He also forbade worshiping others besides him.

Allāh says:

وَأَنَّهُ بَعْثَنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رِسْوَأًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

And verily, We have sent among every nation a messenger (proclaiming), “Worship Allāh and avoid (keep away from) at-tāghūt (all false deities, i.e., do not worship tāghūt besides Allāh).”

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:36]

Allāh says:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَشْرُكُوا بِهِ شِيْئًا

Worship Allāh and join none with Him (in worship).

[Sūrah an-Nisā’ 4:36]

Allāh says:
Whoever disbelieves in āqībat and believes in Allāh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:256]

Allāh made it crystal-clear that whoever singles Him out, sincerely worships Him, and does not taint his faith with polytheism shall be awarded safety in the worldly life and the Hereafter in company with those who are guided to the Straight Path. Allāh says:

[Allāh made it crystal-clear that whoever singles Him out, sincerely worships Him, and does not taint his faith with polytheism shall be awarded safety in the worldly life and the Hereafter in company with those who are guided to the Straight Path. Allāh says:]

Those who believe and confuse not their belief with wrongdoing, theirs is safety; and they are rightly guided.

[Sūrah al-An‘ām 5:82]

The verse refers to those who sincerely worship Allāh alone and do not defile their faith with polytheism, those who thereby earned the title of monotheists. The word “confuse” in the verse means “taint”; as for “wrongdoing,” it refers to polytheism.

‘Abdullāh bin Mas‘ūd narrated:

When the verse: “Those who believe and confuse not their belief with
wrongdoing”¹ was revealed, the Muslims became extremely anxious and said, “O Allah’s Messenger ﷺ! Who amongst us does not wrong himself?” He replied, “The verse does not mean this. But that (wrongdoing) means to associate others in worship besides Allah. Aren’t you familiar with what Luqman said to his son when he was advising him: ‘O my son! Join not in worship others with Allah. Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a serious wrong indeed.’”²

The profession of tawhid is perfectly expressive. This great profession—lā ilāha ill-Allāh—is what Allāh has borne witness with for Himself, and His angels and the scholars [also bear witness with this].

Allāh says:

شَهِيدَ اللَّهُ أَنْتَ لَآ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمُلْكُ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

Allāh bears witness that lā ilāha illā Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in justice. None has the right to be worshiped but He, the All Mighty, the All Wise.

[Sūrah Āl i 'Imrān 3:18]

This profession is what identifies Islām; the perfection of one’s belief is inextricably associated with knowing the underlying purpose of this profession and its implication, along with accepting and complying with it. Indeed, it is the profession of sincerity that opposes polytheism, the profession of righteousness that guards its adopter from disbelieving in Allāh, and it is the distinctive profession between Islām and disbelief.

Additionally, all the prophets and messengers were sent proclaiming it. Allāh says:

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¹ Soorah Luqman 31:13
² Recorded by al-Bukhāri (3181-3264) and Muslim (124).
And verily, We have sent among every ummah (nation or community) a messenger (proclaiming), “Worship Allâh and avoid at-tâghût (all false deities besides Allâh).”

[Sûrah an-Nahl 16:36]

Witnessing that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh—the One, the Self-Sufficient Master Whom all creatures need, Who did not beget nor was He begotten, and there is none equal or comparable unto Him—is the essence of tawhîd which eradicates major polytheism; and upon it, the qiblah (prayer direction) was established, the life and wealth of the individual were spared, and the residence of Islâm was separated from the residence of disbelief.

This book (and I ask Allâh to make it sincerely for His sake and to benefit His creation with it) is devoted to illustrating some aspects pertaining to the profession lâ ilâha ill-Allâh, its nullifiers, some of its virtues, and its syntactic analysis.

I ask Allâh by His noblest names and attributes to grant us sincerity in purpose and intention, to grant us adequacy in sayings and actions, and to accept our deeds owing to His generosity; indeed, He is Omnipotent.

May Allâh praise and bestow peace upon the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, his forefathers, Ibrāhîm and Ismâ‘îl, and upon all prophets and messengers, the Prophet’s family, and the Companions. And the close of our request will be: al-ḥamdu lillâhi Rabbil-‘âlamin (all praise and thanks be to Allâh, the Lord of mankind, jinn, and all that exists).

Abû ‘Abdullâh Muḥammad bin Sa‘îd Raslân
Subk al-Aḥad, Egypt – Thursday
25 Jumâdah al-Âkhirah 1430 AH (June 18, 2009 CE)
GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

All praise is due to Allāh. We thank Him, seek His assistance, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our own souls and from our wicked deeds. None can guide whomever Allāh allows to go astray and none can mislead whomever Allāh guides. I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, without partners, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.

Allāh says:

«يَا أَيُّهَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا أَتَقُوا اللَّهَ حَتَّى تُقَاتِهِ وَلاَ تَتَّمُّونَ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ»

O you who believe! Fear Allāh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except as a Muslim [in a state of Islām (with complete submission to Allāh)].

[Sūrah Āl ʿĪmārān 3:102]

Allāh says:

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا رَبُّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ َّنَفْسٍ»
O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who has created you from a single person (Ádam), and from him (Ádam) He created his wife [Ḫawwā' (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allâh through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the kinship. Surely, Allâh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.

[Sûrah an-Nisâ' 4:1]

Allâh says:

O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement.

[Sûrah al-Ahzâb 33:70-71]

To proceed:

The most truthful speech is the Book of Allâh (the Qur'ân) and the best of guidance is that of Muḥammad ﷺ; the worst of evils are the newly invented matters (in religion), and every innovated matter (in Islâm) is a bid'ah and every bid'ah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire.
General Overview Of The Book

To proceed:

Verily, the foremost matter individuals should put into effect is learning the purpose for which Allāh created them, took the covenant upon them, sent His messengers to them, and sent down His divine scriptures. For this purpose, the worldly life, the Hereafter, Paradise, and the Hellfire were created. Additionally, owing to this purpose, Judgment Day will be established, the scales of deeds will be set, the sheets of deeds will be scattered, and sorrow and happiness will be on that Day on which light will be distributed.

Allāh says:

»وَمَن لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ «

And he for whom Allāh has not appointed light, for him there is no light.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:40]

Allāh instructs us that we are created to worship Him. The backbone and foundation of worship is tawḥīd, which all the messengers were missioned to proclaim. The simple profession that comprises tawḥīd in its entirety is very short, has copious implications, and is critically significant; it is:

Lā ilāha ill-Allāh.

It is the testimony of faith and the key to the abode of happiness. It is the foundation of this religion, the trunk of its tree, the pillar of its pavilion, while the rest of the pillars and obligations branch out of it, integrate it, and are restricted by observing and implementing its requirements. The whole purpose behind creation is crystallized in Allāh’s saying:

»وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجَنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيُبَيِّنَونَ «

And I (Allāh) created not the jinn and mankind
except that they should worship Me.

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56]

Allāh has obligated every accountable individual to profess that nothing is worthy of worship except Allāh and to act accordingly.

He says:

«فَاعِفُهُمْ أَنَّهُ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي أَنَا لِذَٰلِكَ وَاسْتَعْفِرْ لِذَٰلِكَ»

So know (Muhammad) that lā ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh), and ask forgiveness for your sin.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:19]

The initial matter that messengers addressed their people with was:

«اعْبِدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنُ إِلَهٖ غَيْرُهُ»

Worship Allāh! You have no other ilāh (god) but Him.

[Sūrah al-Aʿrāf 7:59]

This great profession is linguistically comprised of negation and affirmation. Allāh sent all the messengers to convey it as the first thing in their mission.

Allāh says:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنَّهُمْ يُعِبْدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَبَىْوا الطَّاغِيَّةَ

And verily, We have sent among every ummah (nation or community) a messenger (proclaiming), “Worship Allāh and avoid (keep away from) at-tāghūt (all false deities).”

[Sūrah an-Nāḥl 16:36]
Allāh says:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاتَبِعُونِ

And We did not send any messenger before you (O Muḥammad) but We revealed to him (saying): “Lā ilāha illā Ana [none has the right to be worshiped but I (Allāh)], so worship Me (alone and none else).”

[Sūrah al-Anbiyā‘ 21:25]

This profession is the reason for which Allāh created the jinn and mankind, the heavens and the earth, and ultimately, because of it, people will have been separated into two groups: one will dwell in Paradise while the other will dwell in the Hellfire. Lā ilāha ill-Allāh is the profession of sincerity because it banishes shirk and declares worship to be exclusively for Allāh.

Furthermore, it is the word of piety in Allāh’s statement:

ذِئِ جَعَلَ الْذِّينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيمَةَ جَاهِلِيَّةَ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَزَمَّهُمْ كُلَّمَةَ الْقَوْيَ وَكَانُوا أَحْقَبَ يَهَا وَأَهْلِهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

When those who disbelieve had put in their hearts pride and haughtiness—the pride and haughtiness of the Time of Ignorance—then Allāh sent down His sakīnah (calmness and tranquility) upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and made them stick to the word of piety (i.e., none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh); and they were well-entitled to it and worthy of it. And Allāh is the All-Knower of everything.

[Sūrah al-Fātihah 48:26]
Allāh says:

«فَمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالْطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ فَقَدَ اسْتَمَتَّكَ بِالْغُرُورِ الْوُلْدَيْنِ لَا انْفَصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سِمْعُ عَلِيمٌ»

Whoever disbelieves in ṭāghūt and believes in Allāh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allāh is All Hearer, All Knower.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:256]

It is the promise referred to in Allāh’s saying:

«لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلّا مَنْ أَتَحْدَى عَنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا»

None shall have the power of intercession, but such a one as has received permission (or promise) from the Most Gracious (Allāh).

[Sūrah Maryam 19:87]

It is the good deed referred to in Allāh’s saying:

«مَن جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا وَهُمْ مِّنْ فَرَعٍ يَوْمِئِذٍ آمِنُونَ»

Whoever brings a good deed (i.e., belief in the oneness of Allāh along with every deed of righteousness), will have better than its worth; and they will be safe from the terror on that Day.

[Sūrah an-Naml 27:89]

It is the word of rightness referred to in Allāh’s saying:

«وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الْذِّينِ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ»
Except for those who bear witness to the truth knowingly (i.e., believed in the oneness of Allah, and obeyed His orders), and they know (the facts of the oneness of Allah).

[Sura az-Zukhruf 43:86]

It is the word of piety referred to in Allah’s saying:

وَأَلْقَاهُمْ كُلُّ مَثَالٍ عَزِيزٍ كُلُّهَا وَأَقْرَأُوا أَحَدٍ إِذَا وَأَهْلَهَا

And made them stick to the word of piety (i.e., none has the right to be worshiped except Allah); and they were well-entitled to it and worthy of it.

[Sura al-Fath 48:26]

It is the loftiest similitude referred to in Allah’s saying:

وَلَهُ الْمَثَالُ الأَعْلَى فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

To Him belongs the loftiest similitude (we can think of) in the heavens and the earth, for He is Exalted in Might, full of Wisdom.

[Sura ar-Rum 30:27]

It is the husnā (the best) referred to in Allah’s saying:

فَأَمَأَ مِنْ أَعْطَى وَأَقْرَأَ وَصُدُقَ بِالْخَسَنِى ۗ فَسَيُسَرُّهُ الْيَسَرُّى

And for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Allah, and believes in al-husnā. We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness).

[Sura al-Layl 92:5-7]

It is the profession that stands firm referred to in Allah’s saying:
Allāh will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world (i.e., they will keep worshiping Allāh alone and none else) and in the Hereafter.

[Sūrah Ibrāhīm 14:27]

Allāh will hold the messengers and their respective nations in reckoning about it. Allāh says:

Then surely, We shall question those (people) to whom it (the Book) was sent and verily, We shall question the messengers.

[Sūrah al-Aʿrāf 7:6]

So, He says to the messengers:

What was the response you received (from men to your teaching)?

[Sūrah al-Māʾidah 5:109]

And He says to the nations:

What answer gave you to the messengers?

[Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ 28:65]

So, là ilāha ill-Allāh is the word of sincerity and piety, the word of the most trustworthy handhold, and it is the profession that critically distinguishes disbelief from faith. It is obligatory to combine believing
in its meaning with uttering it and implementing its requirements, since the ultimate goal is having knowledge of its meaning beyond its mere utterance. In fact, mere utterance of this testimony stands futile unless one displays commitment to its requirements. Ironically, the hypocrites profess it, [yet] they will reside beneath the disbelievers in the lowest depth of the Hellfire despite their prayer, charity, fasting, or their occasional performance of pilgrimage.

The ultimate purpose is to achieve a combination of belief in the heart, utterance of the tongue, and implementation of the requirements of là ilâha ill-Allâh. This task is accomplished by singling out Allâh with worship and worshiping none besides Him. In short, the statement of là ilâha ill-Allâh entails professing it, knowing it, and putting it into action.
The meaning of la ilaha ill-Allah is: There is nothing worthy of worship except Allah, which invalidates the worship of any deity besides Him.

Allah says:

َّهُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يُدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ

That is because Allah—He is the Truth; and those besides Him whom they invoke, they are but vain falsehood. Verily, Allah, He is the Most High, the Most Great.

[Surah al-Hash 22:62]

Allah says:

فَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَأَلَّهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَسْتَعْفِرُ لَذَٰلِكَ

So know (Muhammad) that la ilaha ill-Allah (none has the right to be worshiped except Allah), and ask
forgiveness for your sin.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:19]

Shaykh-ul-Islām said, “The word ilāh (deity) is the object of worship or adoration, and He is the One who deserves to be worshiped.”

Lā ilāha ill-Allāh means: There is nothing worthy of worship except Allāh. Thus, it is imperative to single out Allāh with worship; this refers to Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah. Opposition, consequential discord, and jihād against the disbelievers sprang up after the denial of the concept of tawḥīd. However, “ulūhiyyah” here refers to worship.

The meaning of lā ilāha ill-Allāh is unanimously agreed upon amongst linguists, scholars of tafsīr, and jurists to assert that the word “deity” refers to the One God (Allāh) who deserves to be worshiped.

As for the definition of the word “worship,” some define it as follows: It refers to what is legally ordained, which excludes tradition and actions based on reason. However, the common interpretation reported to be stated by the Salaf is that worship signifies obedience to Allāh; hence, it encompasses observing the commands and abstaining from the prohibitions. So, whoever dedicates any act of worship like supplication, prostration, slaughter, or vowing to other than Allāh, would be classified as a polytheist.

Lā ilāha ill-Allāh implies disbelieving in whatever is worshiped besides Him, because this profession is self-expressive in singling out Allāh with acts of worship and declaring absolute rejection of deities besides Him. This is because “disbelief in any deity besides Allāh” means declaring absolute rejection of it and maintaining a firm belief in its invalidity; likewise, this meaning applies to disbelief in at-tāghūt:

فَمَن يَكْفُرُ بِالْطَّاعُوبِ وَيُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ

3 Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā
Whoever disbelieves in at-țāghūt and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:256]

Tāghūt is a name assigned to whatever deity is worshiped besides Allah. Allah refers to this in His statement:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ إِنْ اَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجتِبَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ  

And verily, We have sent among every ummah (nation or community) a messenger (proclaiming), “Worship Allah and avoid (keep away from) at-țāghūt (all false deities i.e., do not worship tāghūt besides Allah.)”

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:36]

So, “none has the right to be worshiped except Allah” has two pillars: negation and affirmation. The phrase “none has the right to be worshiped” negates the worship of any other than Allah. The phrase “except Allah” establishes the worship of Allah only.

The negation and affirmation in lā ilāha ill-Allāh is clearly the monotheism brought by the messengers and revealed in the scriptures. This profession confines divinity to Allah alone. It includes worshiping, trusting, and obeying Him only. Moreover, [it includes] pledging allegiance to Allah only and intending none but Him with our actions. Therefore, the tawhīd that all the messengers were missioned for implies compliance with the names and attributes Allah established for Himself.

Tawhid is not fulfilled except with this profession of faith. It dismantles divinity from whatever is besides Allah, whether they are messengers (including the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ), angels (inclu-
ing Jibrīl), or any other prophet or righteous individual. It affirms divinity for Allāh alone (Glorified be He). Neither negation nor affirmation alone is sufficient; rather, they both must be combined.

One can clearly grasp this notion if one is familiar with the Arabic rhetorical style of “restriction.” For instance, if one says, “Zayd is brave,” this does not exclusively describe him as the only brave person. There is even a possibility that someone is braver than him. Moreover, if one says, “Zayd is not brave,” this also does not exclusively strip bravery from him. But when one says, “None is brave but Zayd,” then bravery, in this case, is exclusively particular to him.

Based on this illustration, lā ilāha ill-Allāh denies divinity for other than Allāh and establishes it for Allāh (Glorified be He) exclusively because, as mentioned earlier, neither negation nor affirmation alone is sufficient. Rather, they both must be combined.

Al-Imām Muḥammad bin ‘Abdul-Wahhāb said:

Know—may Allāh have mercy upon you—that lā ilāha ill-Allāh is composed of negation and affirmation, and it negates four things and affirms four things:

It denies divinity (for other than Allāh): tāghūt, rivals, and arbāb.

1) Ilāh (a deity) is: The one people seek for bringing good and repelling harm, and therefore, he is held as God.

2) Tāghūt: This refers to whoever is worshiped, or a candidate for object of worship, who is pleased with such adoration.

3) Rivals: Whatever drives the person away from Islām, such as family, home, clan, or wealth; they are rivals, as Allāh says:

وَمَنَ النَّاسِ مِن يَتَجَهُّ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْذَادَا يَجْبُونَهُمَّ
كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ

And of mankind are some who take (for worship)
others besides Allāh as rivals. They love them as they love Allāh.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:165]

4) *Arbāb* refers to any person who issues a ruling that opposes the truth in response to an inquiry; this ruling receives obedience from the inquirer. This conforms to Allāh’s saying:

أَتَّخَذُوا آخَارِينَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسِيْحِ يِنْسِمَ مَرَّمَ مَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبَدُوا إِلَهَّٰهُ وَاحِدًا لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:165

They have taken as lords besides Allāh their rabbis and their monks and the Messiah, son of Mary, when they were bid to worship only one God. There is nothing that has the right to be worshiped except Him. Be He glorified from all that they ascribe as partners (unto Him!)

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:31]

On the other hand, it affirms three things:

1) The person’s intent: The individual intends none by his worship except Allāh.

2) Exaltation and love; Allāh says:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشْدُدُ حُبًّا لَّلَّهِ But those who believe, love Allāh more (than anything else).

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:165]

3) Fear and hope; Allāh says:

وَإِن يَتَّقِمُونَ اللَّهَ يُضَرِّعُ فَلاَ كَاِشْفُ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِن وَٰ
And if Allāh touches you with harm, there is none who can remove it but He, and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His favor, which He causes to reach whomsoever of His slaves He wills. And He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

[Sūrah Yūnus 10:107]

Whoever has a good grasp of that verse would cut any ties with other than Allāh and he would not be afraid to rebut the malice of falsehood, as Allāh informs us about Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him, as well as our Prophet) when he knocked down the idols and severed the ties between him and his people.

Allāh says:

Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrāhīm and those with him, when they said to their people, “Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allāh: we have rejected you.”

[Sūrah al-Mumtaḥanah 60:4]

[End of quote from al-Imām Muḥammad bin ‘Abdul-Wahhāb.]

This dignified statement literally denies divinity for other than Allāh and literally affirms it for Him solely. The Shaykh, al-Imām, the famous, the jurist, the explicator, the scholar and the criticizer, Muḥammad al-Amīn ash-Shaqqāḥī said, “The most effective kind

4 Al-Jawābir al-Mudīyyah (34-35).
of linguistic restriction is negation and affirmation as found in la ilaha ill-Allah."

The scholars of usul al-fiqh (fundamentals of jurisprudence) maintain that the literal, explicit meaning of la ilaha ill-Allah denies divinity for other than Allah (Glorified be He), while its implicit implication asserts affirmation of divinity for Him alone. In contrast, rhetoricians reverse the former order.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Amīn ash-Shanqīṭī said, “The indisputable fact is that both negation and affirmation are clearly derived from the literal meaning, because the phrase ‘there is nothing’ is definitive in negation, and the phrase ‘except Allah’ is definitive in affirmation.”

So both negation and affirmation are definitively derived from the literal, explicit meaning, but considering them to be derived from the implicit meaning is incorrect, in my opinion.

To summarize, the most efficient form of restriction is negation and affirmation as found in la ilaha ill-Allah. The meaning of la ilaha ill-Allah is affirming the right of worship for Allah solely with no partner in Allah’s dominion and stripping this right from all others besides Him (Glorified be He).

Allah says:

ٌذَٰلِكَ بَيْنَ الْلَّهِ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يُدْعَوْنَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ النَّبَأَتِ الْكَبِيرَ

That is because Allah—He is the Truth, and what they invoke besides Him, it is falsehood, and because Allah, He is the Most High, the Most Great.


5 Mudhakkirah Fi Usul al-Fiqh (285).
6 Ibid.
**THE CONDITIONS OF LĀ ILĀHA ILL-ALLĀH**

*Lā ilāha ill-Allāh* is the most trustworthy handhold, the word of piety, the *ḥanīfyyah* (monotheism), the religion of Ibrāhīm, and it is the word that Allāh made to last among Ibrāhīm's offspring. Moreover, for its sake, the process of creation took place, the earth and the heavens were established, messengers were missioned, and scriptures were revealed.

Allāh says:

«وَما خَلَقْتُ الْجَنّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لَيَعْبُدُونِ»

And I (Allāh) created not the *jinn* and mankind except that they should worship me.

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56]

Allāh says:

«وَلَقَدْ بَعْثَنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ يُعْبِدُوا اللَّهَ وَأَشْتَبَهُوا الْطَّاغُوتَ»
And verily, We have sent among every ummah (nation or community) a messenger (proclaiming), “Worship Allāh and avoid (keep away from) at-tāghūt (all false deities; i.e., do not worship tāghūt besides Allāh).”

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:36]

Indeed, the underlying reason behind this profession is not merely saying it with the tongue while having absolute ignorance of its essence; this attitude proves itself to be profitless. Ironically, hypocrites profess it outwardly, yet they will dwell underneath the disbelievers at the far end of the Hellfire. The essence of this profession, “lā ilāha ill-Allāh,” is negating divinity for other than Allāh (Glorified be He) and establishing it for Him solely with no partner; none is worthy of sharing it, neither an angel nor a messenger.

Allāh says:

إن كُلُّ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّآ أَنَا الرَّحْمَنُ عَبْدًا ۗ وَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدُّهُمْ عَدَّاً وَكُلُّهُمْ أَنْتَهْيَهُ بَيْوَمِ الْقِيَāمَةِ فَرَدًا

There is none in the heavens and the earth but must come to the Most Gracious (Allāh) as a servant. Verily, He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. And every one of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Judgment.

[Sūrah Maryam 19:93-95]

Allāh says:

يَوْمَ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ نَّجَادُ عَن نَّفْسِهَا

Remember the Day when every person will come up pleading for himself.

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:111]
So if it is said, “There is no creator except Allah,” this is taken for granted since none is associated with Him, neither an angel nor a messenger. And if it is said, “There is no provider except Allah,” this is true. Also, if it is said, “La ilaha ill-Allah,” this is absolutely true.

Verily, God is the one who is worshiped. This interpretation is unanimously agreed upon by scholars. Hence, whoever worships anything else has taken it as a god besides Allah. However, all deities are false except Allah (Glorified be He). Furthermore, the obligation of familiarizing oneself with la ilaha ill-Allah precedes the obligations of prayer and fasting, so the servant must pursue knowledge of this profession more studiously than pursuing knowledge of prayer and fasting. Similarly, the prohibition of shirk and having faith in at-tâghît is more serious than the prohibition of marrying mothers or grandmothers.

The highest rank of faith in Allah is testifying that none has the right to be worshiped but Him. And the meaning of this is that all aspects of divinity are solely devoted to Allah; not a single one of them is dedicated to a messenger, an angel, or a righteous servant. Divinity is Allah’s rightful due upon His servants.

Shaykh-ul-Islam  said, “Know that the servant’s desperate need of Allah means to worship Him with no partner, since He, the Almighty, has no equal with which one can match Him. This need is quite similar, in some respects, to the need of the body for food and drink, though there is a wide gap between both of them. The very essence of the servant lies in his heart and soul—nothing holds them upright but belief in the one sole God (Ilâh); they never find peace except in His remembrance. And if the servant is engaged in any pleasure or worldly enjoyment that does not involve Allah, it shall vanish after a while; the servant will always experience a constant mode of shifting from one pleasure to another. On the contrary, the servant stands desperately in need of His deity in every situation and every time, and everywhere he goes, He is with him.”

7 Majmû’ al-Fatâwâ (1/24).
The essence of *lā ilāha ill-Allāh* is believing and confessing that none is worthy of worship except Allāh, committing to such belief, and implementing it. In terms of its general meaning, it asserts that none is rightfully worshiped except Allāh. Additionally, “divinity” refers to worship; this particular part has been misinterpreted by many.

Shaykh al-Fawzān presents an overview of various interpretations of the profession of faith:

**The interpretation of pantheism**\(^8\) adopters: The adopters of such belief, like Ibn 'Arabi and the likes of him, maintain that *lā ilāha ill-Allāh* means: There is no deity worshiped except Allāh or there is no existent god except Allāh. This entails that whatever is worshiped is named Allāh (far above is He from such things). Existence, in their belief, is not composed of a creator and creation; both of them constitute a single entity—namely, Allāh. Therefore, they were attributed with the belief of pantheism.

They deem existence to be one single entity, not viable for division; it is all Allāh. Any worshiped entity, according to their belief, is Allāh, be it cows, idols, stones, humans, or angels. They are all named “Allāh” since Allāh is the absolute existence.

They [the pantheists] judge that whoever says that existence is divided into a creator and creation is a polytheist; according to them, no one is counted among the monotheists except those who believe that existence is a single entity named Allāh.

It is noteworthy to refer to a mistake committed by some people who say “none is worshiped except Allāh”—this statement corresponds with the belief of pantheism. However, if one adds the word “truly/rightfully,” it will be consistent with the true belief.\(^9\)

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\(^8\) **Translator’s Note:** A doctrine that the universe conceived of, as a whole, is God; the doctrine that there is no God but the combined forces and laws that are manifested in the existing universe. (Merriam Webster’s Dictionary).

\(^9\) **Translator’s Note:** Adding the word “rightfully” is intended to reflect one's firm belief in Allāh's right of monotheistic worship for His sake alone, with no partner. The following illustration by the author, yet to come, will explore the implication of the word.
Allah says:

\[
\text{ذَلِكَ ۡيَٰنَّ ٱللَّهَ ۝ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَٰنَّ مَآ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ هُوَ ٱلْبَاطِلُ وَۡ أَنَّ ٱلَّهَ ۝ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِيُّ ٱلْكُبَّارُ}
\]

That is because Allah—He is the Truth, and what they invoke besides Him, it is falsehood, and because Allah, He is the Most High, the Most Great.

[Surah al-‘A’raf 22:62]

The interpretation of theology scholars: They maintain that *lā ḥāfa ill-Allāh* means: No one has the power of invention, creation, and disposition of the universe except Allah. This stance, however, is incorrect since it corresponds to the religion of the polytheists, who believe that no one can create except Allah, and no one can give life, cause death, and bless with wealth and sustenance except Allah. This belief lies within the boundaries of Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah (Tawḥīd of Lordship).

The interpretation of al-Jahmiyyah and al-Mu’taṣilah: They and whoever follows them interpret it by denying the names and attributes of Allah. Hence, [they believe that] whoever believes in the names and attributes of Allah is a polytheist. Tawḥīd, according to their belief, is denying the names and attributes.

The interpretation of partisans like al-Ikhwān and al-Qūṭbiyyīn: They hold that *lā ḥāfa ill-Allāh* means: The rulership is solely for Allah, and that rulership (as they call it) is part of the meaning of *lā ḥāfa ill-Allāh* because its meaning is inclusive of all kinds of worship.

Our response to them is as follows: Where are the rest of the acts of worship?! Where is kneeling?! And where are prostrating, slaughtering, vowing, and the rest of the acts of worship?! Is “worship” only restricted to the rulership? If so, does it ban any kind of *shirk*?

Nonetheless, the addition of the word is absolutely futile if it does not come from a sincere belief in its true implication. Adding it at this moment is no less absurd than neglecting it.
SubhānAllāh! These matters should be paid their due attention because the profession of faith is great, as it rescues whoever implements its requirements from the Hellfire. The religion of Islām from A to Z is built upon it, as were the call of the messengers and the revealed scriptures.

The interpretation of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah: The meaning of lā ilāha ill-Allāh is: None is rightfully worshiped except Allāh, because (false) deities exist in great numbers but the only rightful deity is Allāh, alone, and whatever remains is discredited.

Allāh says:

| ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يُدْعَوْنَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ النَّافِئُ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ |

That is because Allāh—He is the Truth, and what they invoke besides Him, it is falsehood, and because Allāh, He is the Most High, the Most Great.


So lā ilāha ill-Allāh is composed of negation and affirmation; it denies divinity for other than Allāh, like messengers (including Muḥammad ﷺ) and angels (including Jibrīl), as well as prophets and pious individuals, and establishes it for Allāh only. This profession of faith implies all the following divisions of tawḥīd as laid down by Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah:

1) Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah (oneness of Allāh): This is because it means that none is worthy of worship except Allāh. “None has the right to be worshiped” negates the worthiness of worship for other than Allāh, and “except Allāh” establishes that all acts of worship must be devoted to Allāh alone without partners.

2) Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah (Lordship of Allāh): This means that Allāh has all features of lordship alone. This division of tawḥīd is embedded in the meaning of the profession of faith by means of
implication, because the One who is solely worthy of worship must have all features of lordship exclusively. Allāh says:

\[
\text{ْ هَلْ مِنَ الْخَالِقِ عَلَيْهِ شَرْفُ كُلِّ مَنِّ الْسَمَاeِ وَالْأَرْضِ}
\]

\[
	ext{لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ}
\]

Is there any creator other than Allāh who provides for you from the sky (rain) and the earth? Lā ilāha illā Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped except He).

[Sūrah Fātir 35:3]

The previous verse indicates that none is worthy of worship except the one who has exclusive ownership, sustenance, and the rest of the features of lordship.

3) Tawḥīd al-Asmā' waš-Ṣifāt (names and attributes of Allāh): Affirming the existence of Allāh and singling Him out with worship automatically implies the existence of His names and attributes because it is logically inconceivable for an entity to exist without enjoying names and attributes. Such description only applies to the nonexistent and the impossible.

Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah explicitly stated that the profession of tawhīd implies all divisions of tawhīd: “The testimony of lā ilāha ill-Allāh points to the three divisions of tawhīd: ar-Rubūbiyyah, al-Ulūhiyyah, and al-Asmā' waš-Ṣifāt. These three divisions form the basis of all the Messages brought by the messengers and their respective scriptures. They are the grand foundation attested to by reason and nature.”\(^{10,11}\)

This great profession of faith has conditions that must be fulfilled in order to benefit the one who says it. Those conditions are stated in the following poetic verses composed by Shaykh Ḥāfiz al-Ḥakami in

\(^{10}\) Ar-Radd as-Sadid 'Alā Man Ankar Taqsīm at-Tawhīd (29).

\(^{11}\) Sharḥ Risālah Tafsīr Kalimah at-Tawhīd (146-148).
As-Sullam:  

Knowledge, certainty, and acceptance  
Total submission, and pay close attention to what I say  
Truthfulness, sincerity, and love  
May Allāh grant you success to what He loves.

This great profession is tied to a relatively heavy restriction, which is heavier than the mountains for whomever Allāh allows to go astray, and carrying it out is more difficult for such individuals than chains and shackles. In contrast, for whomever Allāh grants success, guides to the ways of safety, and shapes his desires to be in conformity with the Prophet’s message, it is easier than anything else.

No wonder, then, that the commandment of Allāh to His servants is the word of tawhīd which is the distinguishing mark between disbelief and faith.

Allāh says:

١٢٣َٰتَسِيرَ لِكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّئَنَا مَعَ الَّذِينَ أُحْتَمَّا
إِلَّا أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ

The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Nūḥ, that which We have sent by inspiration to you, and that which We enjoined on Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, and ‘Īsā, saying namely, that you should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein.

[Sūrah ash-Shūrā 42:13]

And these conditions are [as follows].

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12 Check Ma’ārij al-Qabūl Fi Sharḥ Sullam al-Wuṣūl (1/410-424).
THE FIRST CONDITION

Knowledge

[This condition is] having knowledge of what is meant by la ilaha ill-Allah, which includes the negation and affirmation. This knowledge must be sufficient, and it removes any speck of ignorance.

Allah says:

« فَأَعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّهُ »

So know (O Muhammad) that la ilaha ill-Allah (none has the right to be worshiped except Allah).

[Surah Muhammad 47:19]

And He said:

« وَلَا يُمِلِّكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ »

And those whom they invoke instead of Him have no power of intercession—except for those who bear witness to the truth knowingly (i.e., believed in the oneness of Allah, and obeyed His orders), and they know.

[Surah az-Zukhruf 43:86]

“Bear witness” refers to uttering la ilaha ill-Allah, believing in their hearts what they said with their tongues.

Allah says:

« شَهِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّهُ الَّذِي هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ »

« بِالْقِسْطِ لَلَّهُ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ »

Allāh bears witness that *lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshiped but He), and the angels and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in justice. *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshiped but He), the All Mighty, the All Wise.

[Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān 3:18]

Allāh says:

قُلِ هَلِ يَسْتَوِي الْذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالْذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

Say: “Are those who know equal to those who know not?”

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:9]

Allāh says:

إِنَّمَا يَحْلَيْنَى اللَّهُ مَنْ عَبَادِهِ الْعَلْمَاءَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزيٌّ غَفُورٌ

It is only those who have knowledge among His servants that fear Allāh.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:28]

Allāh says:

وَتَلَكَ الْأَمَالِ تُضَرِّبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ

And such are the parables We set forth for mankind; but none will understand them except those who have knowledge.

[Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt 29:43]

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Uthmān that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

مَنْ مَاتَ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ.
He who died knowing (fully well) that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh has entered Paradise.\(^{13}\)

[This restricts] the profession of faith with the full knowledge of its meaning, which is negating that any act of worship be devoted to other than Allâh, and establishing it (worship) for Allâh alone. Otherwise, [one is] blathering with it like a sleeping person unaware of its meaning—such a person will not comply with what it negates and affirms, as he is totally ignorant of it. How can he implement the requirements of what he does not know?!

The purpose [of this testimony] is not the mere utterance by the tongue accompanied by ignorance of its meaning. For instance, the hypocrites utter it, but they are beneath the disbelievers in the deepest end of the Hellfire. The purpose is uttering it while having knowledge of it by heart, loving it and its adopters, and hating whoever opposes it.

The underlying purpose behind the testimony of \(\text{lâ ilâha ill-Allâh}\) is acknowledgment of it shaped by knowledge, utterance, and implementation. This opposes some of the ignorant ones who think that the purpose of this profession is only uttering it or admitting the existence of Allâh or His possession of everything with no partner. Ironically, the idolaters, as well as the People of the Book, have known this much of knowledge and admitted it. If the purpose had been only this, then the issue of \(\text{dâwah}\) to such a profession is unnecessary.

Disbelievers testified that Allâh is the sole Creator with no partner, and no one creates, gives sustenance, gives life, and causes death other than Him, and the seven heavens and the earth, including their inhabitants, are His servants and under His command.

Indeed, the polytheists bore witness to this, and the proof is:

\[
\text{قُلُنَّ مَنْ يَزْرِفُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمَعَ}
\]

\(^{13}\) Recorded by Muslim (6).
Say (O Muḥammad): “Who provides for you from the sky and from the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who disposes the affairs?” They will say, “Allāh.” Say: “Will you not then be afraid of Allāh’s punishment (for setting up rivals in worship with Allāh)?”

[Sūrah Yūnus 10:31]

Allāh says:

قَالَ لَمَّا الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنَّ كَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ءَاتِيْهَا نَفْسًا مُّقَدَّسًا لِّلَّهِ وَقَالُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ أَلَّا تُنَادُوكُمُ الْعَرُشُ الْعَظِيمُ ءَاتِيْهَا نَفْسًا مُّقَدَّسًا لِّلَّهِ وَقَالُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ أَلَّا تَجْعَلُوكُمُ الْجَنَّةَ مَلكَوْتًا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْمَجِيرُ وَلَا يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّكُنَّ مَا يَتَعْلَمُونَ ءَاتِيْهَا نَفْسًا مُّقَدَّسًا لِّلَّهِ وَقَالُ أَفَلَا تَسْحَرُونَ

Say: “To whom belong the earth and all beings therein? (Say) if you know!” They will say, “It is Allāh’s!” Say: “Yet will you not then remember?” Say: “Who is the Lord of the seven heavens, and the Lord of the great Throne?” They will say, “(They belong) to Allāh.” Say: “Will you not then be filled with awe?” Say: “In whose hands is the governance of all things? Who protects (all), while against Him there is no protector, (say) if you know?” They will say, “(It belongs) to Allāh.” Say: “Then how are you deluded?”

[Sūrah al-Mu' mínūn 23:84-89]
The Conditions of Lā Ilāha Ill-Allāh: The First Condition

There are many verses that testify to the previous matters; however, this much acknowledgment was not sufficient for them to fulfill the tawhīd the Prophet ﷺ invited them to. This particular division of tawhīd they rejected is Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah, which the disbelievers call “faith.” They were invoking Allāh daily in the morning and at night, employing fear and hope, and some of them were invoking the angels, messengers, and righteous people to intercede for them due to their righteousness and closeness to Allāh.

Likewise, they used to invoke a pious individual like al-Lāt (one of the three chief goddesses of Arabian religion in the pre伊斯兰 era) or a prophet like Ḥusayn (Jesus). So the Prophet ﷺ fought them and called them to devote their worship sincerely to Allāh.

Allāh says:

وَأَنَّ الْمُسَاَجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلاٰ تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

And the mosques are for Allāh (alone), so invoke not anyone along with Allāh.

[Sūrah al-Jinn 72:18]

Allāh says:

لَهُ دَعَوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالْذِيْنَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لا يَسْتَجِبُونَ

For Him (Allāh, alone) is the Word of Truth (i.e., none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh). And those whom they (polytheists and disbelievers) invoke, answer them no more than one who...

[Sūrah ar-Ra’îd 13:14]

The Prophet ﷺ fought them so that they would devote all the religion, worship, invocation, slaughtering, oath-taking, asking for help, and the rest of the acts of worship, sincerely to Allāh.
The very act acknowledging Allāh’s Lordship, on one hand, was not enough alone to enter them into Islām; on the other hand, seeking angels, messengers, and righteous people to intercede for them and draw them closer to Allāh is the very reason their blood and wealth were rendered violable. The Tawḥīd of Worship is the one that messengers were missioned for but the disbelievers rejected it.

This oneness is the essence of lā ilāha ill-Allāh. Indeed, a deity is the one who is sought for delivering one’s needs, whether it is an angel, a prophet, a righteous individual, a tree, a grave, or a jīm. They (the disbelievers) knew for certain that names like Creator, Sustainer, and Disposer of all Affairs are exclusively for Allāh. The Prophet ﷺ was missioned to invite people to the profession of tawḥīd: "lā ilāha ill-Allāh." The major purpose of it is to realize its essence, not just utter it with the tongue.

Interestingly, the ignorant disbelievers knew that the purpose of this profession is singling out Allāh with attachment and disbelieving in whatever is worshiped besides Him, including freeing oneself from it. Consider the following invitation of the Prophet ﷺ to the disbelievers to believe that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, to which they responded:

أَجْعَلِ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَّهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَلَدَا نَشَأَةُ عِجَابٍ

"Has he made the ālihah (gods) (all) into One Ilāh (God—Allāh). Verily, this is a curious thing!"

[Sūrah Ṣād 38:5]

Truly, the ignorant among the disbelievers knew this fact. How strange and unfortunate it is for a person who claims to be a Muslim to not understand the essence of this profession as much as the ignorant among the disbelievers. This person may even incline to think that the purpose behind it is uttering it only, without the vested belief in the heart; the least ignorant among them is he who thinks it means that no one creates, provides with sustenance, gives life, causes death, and disposes all affairs except Allāh. Indeed, a person whose
knowledge of la ilaha ill-Allah is awfully less than that of the ignorant among the disbelievers is void of any good.

THE SECOND CONDITION
Certainty Versus Doubt

This condition is fulfilled through establishing a firm belief of certainty regarding the genuine essence of the profession of tawhid, because faith is inextricably built on certainty undiluted by doubt and suspicion.

Allâh says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لَمْ يُزَادُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بَأْشَارَيْهِمْ وَآثَارَيْهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولِي الْكَفْرِ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

Only those are the believers who have believed in Allâh and his Messenger, and afterward doubt not but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allâh. Those! They are the truthful.

[Sûrah al-Hujurat 49:15]

Allâh has stipulated for the sincerity of their faith in Allâh and His Messenger that they never sustain any speck of doubt; otherwise, doubt is the action of hypocrites.

Allâh says:

إِنَّمَا يُسَاءَدُنَّكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَاتَّبَعُونَ فُلُوْبَهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي رَيْبِهِمْ يَرَدُّدُونَ

It is only those who believe not in Allâh and the Last
Day and whose hearts are in doubt that ask your leave (to be exempted from jihād). So in their doubts they waver.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:45]

So whoever utters the profession of tawhīd while sustaining doubt, his faith is null, even if it is repeated as [much as] one breathes and even if one cries it out loud until everybody hears.

It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said:

أَشْهَدْ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنْبَثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَا يَلْقَى اللَّهَ بِهِ عَبْدٌ غَيْرَ شَآءَ كَفَيْهِمَا إِلَّا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, and I am His Messenger. The bondsman who meets Allāh without entertaining any doubt about these (two fundamentals) will enter Paradise.\(^\text{14}\)

It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مِنْ لَقِيتِ بِشَهَدٍ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُسْتَقْيَمًا بِهَا قَلْبُهُ، فَبَشَّرْهُ بِالْجَنَّةَ

Anyone you meet behind this wall testifying that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh with full uprightness in his heart, then give him glad tidings of Paradise.\(^\text{15}\)

The Prophet ﷺ stipulated absolute certainty undiluted by doubt for entering Paradise. However, if the condition of certainty is absent, then the resultant entrance into Paradise is off the table. Consequently, none will enter Paradise unless certainty in the heart is established, which is the second condition.

\(^\text{14}\) Recorded by Muslim (27) and Aḥmad (10696).

\(^\text{15}\) Recorded by Muslim (31).
THE THIRD CONDITION

Acceptance

[This condition is] acceptance, by heart and tongue, of what the profession of tawhid requires, and this acceptance opposes rejection.

Allāh says:

 إِنْ هُمْ كَانُوا إِذًا قَيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي يُشْتَكِيرُونَ وَيُقُولُونَ أَنَّا نُتَّارِيكُوْ آلهَتَنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجَنُونٍ 

Truly, when it was said to them, “Lā ilāha ill-Allāh” (none has the right to be worshiped but Allāh), they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e., denied it). And (they) said, “Are we going to abandon our ālihah (gods) for the sake of a mad poet?”

[Sūrah as-Saffāt 37:35-36]

Allāh illustrates that their arrogance [against] believing in ġlāha ill-Allah and their rejection of the one who proclaims it warranted punishment. They did not comply with its negation and affirmation; rather, they defied it with rejection and arrogance by stating:

 أَجْعَلَ الَّآلِهَةَ إِلَيْهَا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَهِيٍّ عَجَابٌ وَانطُوقَ اللَّمَّا مِنْهُمْ أَنِّي أَمْشَوْا وَأَصِبْرُوا عَلَيْهِ تَكُونُ إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَهِيٍّ يِبْرَاءُ مَثْعَبًا بِهِذَا فِي الْمَلَأِ الْآخِرِ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا اخْتِلَاقٌ 

“Has he made the gods (all) into one God. Truly, this is a curious thing!” And the leaders among them go away (impatiently), (saying): “Go on, and remain constant to your gods! For this is truly a thing designed (against you)! We have not heard (the like)
of this among the people of these later days. This is nothing but an invention.”

[Sūrah Ṣād 38:5-7]

Allāh says:

وَيَقُولُونَ أَيَّنَا لَتَأْكِرُ كُرَآً أَلَهْيَتَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجِنٍْ

And (they) said, “Are we going to abandon our ālihāb (gods) for the sake of a mad poet?”

[Sūrah ʿaṣ-Ṣaffāt 37:36]

Except Allāh has accused them of lying, and He defended His Messenger by saying:

بَلْ جَاءَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَدَّقَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

Nay! But he brought the truth, and he confirmed those sent (before him).

[Sūrah ʿaṣ-Ṣaffāt 37:37]

Then Allāh says regarding he who accepts it:

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلِصِينَ ۚ أُولِيَ الْكَفَّارَةِ ۖ لَهُمْ رَزْقٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ۖ وَفَوْاكِهْ وَهُمْ مُكْرَمُونَ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعْيمِ

But the sincere (and devoted) servants of God. For them there is a known provision, fruits; and they will be honored, in the gardens of delight (Paradise).

[Sūrah ʿaṣ-Ṣaffāt 37:40-43]

Allāh says:

مَنَ جَآَهَ بِالْحَسَّةَ فَلَهُ خَبَّرَ مَنْ تَأْتِهَا وَهُمْ مَنْ فَرَعَ يُؤْمِنُونَ

48
Whoever brings a good deed (i.e., belief in the oneness of Allāh along with every deed of righteousness) will have better than its worth; and they will be safe from the terror on that Day.

[Sūrah an-Naml 27:89]

It has been narrated on the authority of Abū Mūsā that he said that Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ said:

مَتَلَ مَا بَعْتَيْنِى اللَّهُ بِهِ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْعَلَمَ كَمَتَلَ الْعَبِيْثُ الْكَبِيرُ أَصَابَ أَرْضًا، فَكَانَ مِنْهَا نَقْبَةٌ قَبِلَتْ الْمَاءَ، فَأَنْبَتَتْ الْكَلَا وَالْعَقْبَةُ الْكَبِيرَ، وَكَانَتْ مِنْهَا أَجَاذُبٌ أَمْسَكَتْ الْمَاءَ، فَنَفَعَ اللَّهُ بِهَا النَّاسِ، فَشَرَبُوا وَسَقُوا وَزرَعوا، وَأَصَبَتْ مِنْهَا طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَى، إِنْ أَمَّا هِيَ قَيِّعَانُ لَا تُمْسِكُ مَاءَ، وَلَا تُنْبُتُ كَلَا، فَذُلِكَ مَتَلُ مِنْ فَقْهِ مِنْ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ وَنَفَعَهُ مَا بَعْتَيْنِى اللَّهُ بِهِ، فَعَلَمْ وَعَلَّمَ، وَمَتَلُ مِنْ لَمْ يَوْفِقَ بِذُلِكَ رَأسًا، وَلَمْ يَقَبِلْ هُدَايْنِ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أُرِسَلُ بِهِ.

The likeness of the guidance and knowledge that Allāh has sent me with is that of rain falling upon the earth: Some of it is good ground that receives the water and brings forth a great deal of herbage and grass; some of it is hard but it retains the water, and Allāh benefits people by it, and they drink it and give it to their animals to drink and use it for irrigation. And another part of it is barren—it does not retain the water or produce herbage. That (the first example) is the likeness of the one who gains an understanding of the religion of Allāh, and Allāh benefits him by what Allāh has sent me with, and he learns and teaches others; and [the second example] is the likeness of the man who pays no attention to that and does not accept Allāh’s guidance with which I have been sent.¹⁶

¹⁶ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (79) and Muslim (2282).
THE FOURTH CONDITION
Compliance and Submission to What It Implies

[This is] compliance versus abandonment.

Allāh says:

Whoever submits his face (himself) to Allāh, and is a doer of good, has grasped indeed the most trustworthy handhold. And to Allāh return all matters for decision.

[Sūrah Luqāmān 31:22]

The one who does not submit his face (himself) to Allāh, nor is he a good-doer, has not grasped the most trustworthy handhold; thus, he will be enlisted among those described in the following verse:

And whoever disbelieves, let not his disbelief grieve you (O Muḥammad). To Us is their return, and We shall inform them what they have done. Verily, Allāh is the All-Knower of what is in the breasts (of men).

[Sūrah Luqāmān 31:23]

“Submit his face (himself) to Allāh” means “to comply”; and “good-doer” refers to “a monotheistic person”; and the “trustworthy handhold” refers to là ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh).

Allāh says:
And turn in repentance and in obedience with true faith (Islamic monotheism) to your Lord and submit to Him (in Islām) before the torment comes upon you; then you will not be helped.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:54]

THE FIFTH CONDITION

Truthfulness Versus Lying

One must profess lā ilāha ill-Allāh truthfully with one’s heart so that both the tongue and the heart work in perfect harmony; otherwise, mere utterance without the heart’s conformity would classify the individual as a lying hypocrite.

Allāh says:

Alif-Lām-Mim. Do people think that they will be left alone on saying, “We believe,” and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them. And Allāh will certainly know those who are true from those who are false.

[Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt 29:1-3]

And Allāh (Glorified be He) says:

51
And of the people, there are some who say, “We believe in Allāh and the Last Day,” but they do not (really) believe. They (think to) deceive Allāh and those who believe, but they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not! In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allāh has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:8-10]

Allāh rebutted their allegation, “We believe in Allāh and the Last Day,” with His saying “but they do not (really) believe.” The rebuttal is based on Allāh’s thorough knowledge of the disease in their hearts and of the fact that their tongues are not consistent with their hearts. They are the worst of the disbelievers, and their abode will be in the far end of the Hellfire.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَا مِنْ أَحَدِ يَشْهِدُ أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صِبْرًا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ إِلَّا حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّارِ

No one testifies that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, believing in it from his heart, except that Allāh will forbid Hell for him.¹⁷

The Prophet ﷺ stipulated that the one who says it must profess it truly from the heart in order to be safe from the Hellfire; otherwise, mere utterance is fruitless.

¹⁷ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (128) and Muslim (32). This is al-Bukhārī’s wording.
[There is] a hadith regarding a Bedouin who came to the Prophet ﷺ to ask him about the pillars of Islam, the greatest of which is lā ilāha ill-Allāh. After the Prophet ﷺ answered his question with the previous response, the Bedouin said, “Is there anything else?” He (the Prophet ﷺ) replied, “No, except whatever you observe voluntarily, out of your own free will.” The man continued, “I will neither make any addition to this nor decrease anything from it.” The Prophet ﷺ remarked, “He will be successful, if he is true to what he affirms.”

The Prophet stipulated being faithful in order to be successful. This rules out the lying hypocrite, as he is ever deprived of success and shall receive failure and demise, may Allāh forbid.

THE SIXTH CONDITION

Sincerity Versus Shirk, Hypocrisy, Showing Off, and Fame

Sincerity is to purify one’s actions with good intentions and relinquish all blemishes of shirk.

Allāh says:

فَاعْبَدُ اللَّهَ مُحِلِّصًا لَّهِ الدُّنْيَا وَالَّذِينَ الصَّالِحِينَ

So worship Him offering Him sincere devotion. Surely the religion (i.e., worship and obedience) is for Allāh only.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:2-3]

And Allāh says:

وَمَا أُمِرْتُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ مُحِلِّصِينَ لَهِ الدُّنْيَا حَتِّيَاءً

And they were commanded not, but that they should

18 Recorded by al-Bukhāri (46) and Muslim (11) on the authority of Ťalḥah bīn ‘Ubaydillāh.
worship Allāh, and worship none but Him alone.

[Sūrah al-Bayyinah 98:5]

Allāh says:

قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْبَدُ مُخْلَصًا لَّهُ دِينِي

Say (O Muḥammad): “Allāh alone I worship.”

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:14]

Allāh says:

إِنَّ الْمُتَّفَقِينَ فِي الْذَّرِّكِ الأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجَدَّ
لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴿۶۲﴾ إِلَّا الْذِّينَ تَأبَأُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَأَخْلَصَوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُلْدِعُكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتَ
اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿۶۳﴾

Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them. Except those who repent (from hypocrisy), do righteous good deeds, hold fast to Allāh, and purify their religion for Allāh (by worshiping none except Allāh, and do good for Allāh’s sake only, not to show off), then they will be with the believers. And Allāh will grant the believers a great reward.

[Sūrah an-Nisā’ 4:145-146]

Allāh made their affiliation to the believers conditional on them devoting their religion to Allāh alone. Otherwise, uttering it without sincerity does not make one a believer; he would inhabit the farthest end of the Hellfire along with the hypocrites. Sincerity is fundamentally essential in the profession of ِlā ilāha ill-Allāh. One must not intend with this profession any of the worldly desires, showing off, or fame.
It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said:

أسعد الناس بشفاعتي يوم القيامة من قال لا إله إلا خالصًا من قلبي.

The most fortunate person who will have my intercession on the Day of Resurrection will be the one who said sincerely from the bottom of his heart, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh.”

It has been narrated on the authority of ‘Ibtān bin Mālik that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إذن الله قد حرمت على النازر من قال لا إله إلا الله يبتغى بذلك وجه الله.

Allāh has forbidden for the Hellfire anyone who says, “There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh,” and says so desiring the Face (and pleasure) of Allāh.

THE SEVENTH CONDITION

Love

[This condition is] love for this great and blessed profession, love for what it requires and guides to, and love for whoever implements it and commits to its conditions. This must be accompanied by hatred for whatever opposes and conflicts with it.

Allāh says:

ومن الناس من يتخد من دون الله أندادًا يجحونهم

19 Recorded by al-Bukhāri (99).
20 Recorded by al-Bukhāri (425) and Muslim (33).
Yet there are men who take (for worship) others besides Allāh as equal (with Him). They love them as they love Allāh. But those of faith are overflowing in their love for Allāh.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:165]

Allāh says:

O you who believe! If any from among you turns back from his faith, Allāh will bring a people whom He will love as they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the way of Allāh, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers.

[Sūrah al-Mā‘idah 5:54]

Allāh informs us that He is the most beloved to the believers because they do not associate anyone in loving Him, unlike the disbelievers, who claim to love Him yet they take rivals besides Allāh whom they love equally with Allāh. The sign of the servant who loves Allāh is that he gives preference to whatever Allāh loves even if it is against his desires, and he hates whatever displeases Allāh even if his desires incline towards it. Furthermore, he pledges allegiance with whoever loves Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ and he opposes whoever displays hostility towards Allāh and His Messenger. Also, he follows the Messenger ﷺ and accepts his guidance. All the previous signs are actually conditions for love, and it would be inconceivable for love to exist if any of them were absent.
The Conditions of Lā Ilāha Ill-Allāh: The Seventh Condition

Allāh says:

آفِرِّئِيْتْ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوْاَةً وَأَضَلَّةَ اللَّهُ عَلَى عِلَمٍ
وَحَتَّمَ عَلَى سُمَّعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَى بَصَرِهِ غَشَّاوةً فَمَنْ
يَهْبِئُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ

Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his ilāh (god)? And Allāh knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allāh?

[Sūrah al-Jāthiyah 45:23]

Thus, whoever associates others with Allāh is a slave to his desires. Rather, all sins spring out of one’s preference for desire over Allāh’s commands and prohibitions.

Allāh says:

لاَ تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالَّيْوُمَ الْآخِرَ يُؤْتُونَ مِنْ
خَادِمَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَبَاً أَبْأَأً هُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءُهُمْ أَوْ أَيْخَوَانَهُمْ
أَوْ عَشَرِينَ فَتَهُمْ

You will not find any people who believe in Allāh and the Last Day loving those who resist Allāh and His Prophet, even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred.

[Sūrah al-Mujādilah 58:22]

Allāh has described His believing servants as the ones who love Him the most, and indeed Allāh (the Almighty) loves them as they love Him. They do not love the one who opposes Allāh and His Messenger, even if he is the closest relative. Based on the previous illustration, whoever loves those who oppose Allāh is considered to be from them; rather, he is from the atheists. As Allāh says:
And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily, Allâh guides not a people who are unjust.

[Sûrah al-Mâ'idah 5:51]

It is narrated on the authority of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said:

There are three qualities by which anyone who is characterized with them will relish the sweetness of faith: he to whom Allâh and His Messenger are dearer than all else, he who loves a man for Allâh's sake alone, and he who has as great an abhorrence for returning to unbelief after Allâh has rescued him from it as he has for being cast into Hell.\(^1\)

So the people who embrace la ilâha ill-Allâh love Allâh sincerely, whereas the polytheists love Allâh while associating others with Him in love, which contradicts the requirements of la ilâha ill-Allâh.

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**THE EIGHTH CONDITION**

Some scholars added an eighth condition: To disbelieve in whatever is worshiped besides Allâh while simultaneously having faith in Allâh as the Lord, the Creator, and the rightful Deity.

Allâh says:

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\(^1\) Agreed upon: Recorded by al-Bukhâri (16) and Muslim (43).
This condition takes us back to the negation and affirmation found in the great profession of *tawḥīd*, *lā ilāha ill-Allāh*, and in the message of the messengers; indeed, all the prophets and messengers were assigned to proclaim the negation and affirmation embedded in *lā ilāha ill-Allāh*.

Allāh says:

\[
\text{Ya qawām ʿaʿbudowallāh ma līkum min ʾilāhī ʿumrōhī)}
\]

O my people! Worship Allāh! You have no other God but Him.

[Sūrah al-Aʿrāf 7:59]

Tāriq bin Ashyam said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh  saying:

\[
\text{Mīn qālā laʾāʾilāh wāʾkīfī ṣīmā ʿaʿbudū min dūn ʾilāhī ḥayrūm mālūhī ʾa}
\]

Dīmū ʾa jāṣābi ʿaʾlāhī ʾlāhī.

He who professes that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and declares a denial of everything that the people worship besides Allāh, his property and blood become inviolable, and his affairs rest with Allāh.\(^{22}\)

\(^{22}\) Recorded by Muslim (23).
The eight conditions are gathered in the following poetic verses:

Knowledge, certainty, and truthfulness along with
Love, compliance, and acceptance.
An eighth one was added: disbelieving in
Whatever is worshiped besides Allāh, like the falsely divine idols.

Additionally, there is a condition appointed for the capable, so there are nine conditions, collectively. They are collected in the following two poetic verses:

Its conditions, lā ilāha ill-Allāh, for whoever is capable to utter it:
Knowledge, certainty, compliance, truthfulness,
Love, sincerity, acceptance,
And disbelief in tāghūt; so pay close attention to what I say.

So the ninth condition is uttering it.

Allāh says:

For they, when they were told that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, would puff themselves up with pride.

[Sūrah aṣ-Ṣaffāt 37:35]

It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that he heard the Messenger of Allāh saying:

I have been ordered to fight with the people until they say, “None has
the right to be worshiped except Allah,” and whoever says, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allah,” his life and property will be saved by me except for Islamic law, and his accounts will be with Allah (either to punish him or to forgive him).²³

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said to his uncle on his deathbed, “Make a profession of it, that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah, and I will bear testimony (of your being a Muslim) on the Day of Judgment.” But he (Abu Talib) refused to do so. Then Allah revealed this verse:

Verily you (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like.²⁴

[Surah al-Qasas 28:56]

To wrap up, the aforementioned conditions are the conditions of la ilaha ill-Allah, which stands fruitless if the one who says it violates any of its conditions; it only yields benefit if the one who says it applies its conditions and distances himself from its nullifiers.

²³ Recorded by al-Bukhari (2946) and Muslim (21).
²⁴ Recorded by Muslim (25).
THE NULLIFIERS OF LÂ ILÂHA ILL-ALLÂH

"Nullifiers" refers to actions that render a certain act null and void; for instance, the nullifiers of ablution. The nullifiers of lâ ilâha ill-Allâh are the ones that expel a person from the fold of Islâm. They are also called causes or kinds of apostasy. Therefore, acquiring knowledge regarding them is critical in order to steer away from them and avoid getting caught in any of them.

Apostasy in Islâm is to turn back from it. Consider the following—Allâh says:

وَلَا تَرْنَٰدَوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقِلْهُمْ حَاسِبَيْنَ

And turn not back (in flight), for then you will be returned as losers.

[Sûrah al-Mâ'idah 5:21]

Allâh says:

وَمَنْ يَرْتَبِذَ مِنَّكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمْتَ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُوْلَٰئِكَ خَيْبَةٌ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ وَأُوْلَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
The Nullifiers of Lā Ilāha Ill-Allāh

And if any of you turn back from their faith and die in unbelief, their actions will bear no fruit in this life and in the Hereafter; they will be companions of the Fire and will abide therein.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:217]

The previous verse explicitly sounds a stark warning from Allāh (Glorified be He) to the believers: "And if any of you turn back from their faith," O believers, "and die in unbelief," and did not repent before death, "their actions will bear no fruit"; this means they will be null, "in this life and in the Hereafter; they will be companions of the Fire and will abide therein."

Allāh says:

 وإنَّ الَّذينَ أرَتدُوا عَلَيْ أَذْنَابْهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهَدَى ۚ الشَّيْطَانُ سَوْلَ لَهُمْ

Those who turn back as apostates after guidance was clearly shown to them—the Shaytān has beautified for them (their false hopes).

[Sūrah Mūḥammad 47:25]

Allāh says:

 إِنَّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتُدُّ مِنكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ بَاتِئِ اللَّهِ يَقُومُ يُجْهَبُهُمْ وَيَجْحِدُونَ أَدَلَّةً عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعْرَةً عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ

O you who believe! If any from among you turns back from his faith, Allāh will bring a people whom He will love as they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers.

[Sūrah al-Mā’idah 5:54]
"If any from among you turns back from his faith" means to depart from one’s religion. This verse sounds a stark warning against apostasy and follows it with an awaited punishment.

‘Abdullāh (bin Mas‘ūd) reported Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ as saying:

لا يَجِلَّ دُمُ ٱلْمُعْلِمِ (يَشِهِدُ أَنْ لا إِلْهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ، وَ أَنَّى ٱلسُّلَّةِ ٱللَّهِ) إِلَّا يَحْدِثُ ثَلَاثًا: ٱلْقَبَّةِ ٱلْأَوَّلِي، وَ ٱلنَّفْسِ بِٱلْمَنْسَى، وَ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ لِدِينِهِ ٱلْمُقَاضِ ۖ لِلْجَمَاعَةِ.

It is not permissible to take the life of a Muslim who bears testimony (to the fact that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, and that I am the Messenger of Allāh), but in one of three cases: the married adulterer, a life for a life, and the deserter of his din (Islām) who abandons the community.

Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ بَدَّلَ دِينَهُ فَاقْتُلِهِ

Whoever changes his religion (i.e., Islām), kill him.

However, if apostates are a powerful group, they are to be fought, as Abū Bakr ﷺ fought the apostates until he subjected them to the reign of Islām, while some of them met their death and others declared repentance.

However, if it is just one apostate, he should be invited to repent, and he is to be executed upon refusal. This apostate is not to be treated like the original disbeliever because he is perfectly aware of the truth, embraces the religion of Allāh willingly, and admits that Islām is the religion of truth.

Thus, if apostasy is committed by this individual, he is to be executed

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25 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (8786) and Muslim (6761).
26 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (4582).
in order to safeguard the religion. Safeguarding the religion stands first among the five basic essentials of Islam that must be preserved. The religion is to be preserved against the repulsive paltering perpetrated by those who embrace Islam and then apostate. They are to be executed to protect the religion from such repulsive action.

Another kind of apostate is those who are to be executed without the invitation to repentance. They are the ones whose apostasy went beyond boundaries; they are to be killed without asking them to repent, in order to safeguard the religion.

The apostate is the one who disbelieves after embracing Islam due to:

1) A belief in the heart.

2) Sustaining a suspicion concerning any religious matter.

3) Committing a grave violation like prostrating, slaughtering, or vowing for other than Allah. Anyone who commits such actions is to be deemed an apostate.

4) An open statement of disbelief, like insulting Allah the Almighty or His Messenger, or the religion of Islam.

Allah says:

قُلْ أَبَاللَّهِ وَآبَاتِهِ وَرُسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تُسْتَهْرُونَ لاَ تَعْتَرَّنُوا قدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانَكُمْ

Say: “Was it at Allah, and His signs, and His Messenger, that you were mocking?” Make no excuses; you have rejected faith after you had accepted it.

[Surah al-Tawbah 9:65-66]

In short, apostasy may be shaped by sayings, actions, belief, or doubt in religious matters like the obligation of the prayer, zakāh, or tawḥīd; whoever sustains any doubt concerning them would be a disbeliever. Doubt reveals uncertainty regarding those obligations.
The nullifiers of *lā ilāha ill-Allāh* are the same as the nullifiers of Islām, because uttering the testimony is the threshold of embracing Islām; it implies acknowledgment of what it guides to and commitment to its requirements, such as observing the rituals of Islām. So, if this commitment is met by a violation, then the covenant one took upon embracing Islām is violated as well.

**THE FIRST NULLIFIER**

**Associating Others With Allāh (Shirk)**

The intended *shirk* here is the major *shirk*—Allāh forbid—which expels the individual from the fold of Islām. *Shirk* is marked by taking mediators between the individual and Allāh through invoking them, seeking their intercession, trusting in them, requesting their help (*istighābah*), making vows for them, and slaughtering for them, as well as believing that they can bring good and repel harm. Whoever does any of these actions is a disbeliever.

Allāh the Almighty says:

«إنَّ الْلَّهَ لَا يُغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرِكُوا مَعَهُ»

Allāh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him.

*[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:48]*

Allāh the Almighty says:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا أَوَّاهُ التَّأْرِيقُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ»

Whoever joins other gods with Allāh, Allāh will forbid him the Garden, and the Fire will be his abode.
There will, for the wrongdoers, be no one to help.

[Sūrah al-Mā‘idah 5:72]

Shirk (polytheism) is the most critical type of apostasy. It happens when others besides Allāh are worshiped with any of the following acts: slaughtering, supplicating, and seeking their assistance in matters that only Allāh is capable of delivering. So, whoever intends by his worship others besides Allāh is to be considered a polytheist.

Allāh mentions a lot of messengers whom He guided to the Straight Path; among them are: Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Ismā‘īl, Išāq, Ya‘qūb, Dāwūd, Sulaymān, Ayyūb, Yūnus, Yūsuf, Mūsā, Hārūn, Zakariyyā, Yahyā, ‘Īsā, Ilyās, al-Yasa’, and Lūṭ. Allāh says:

ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَن يُشَاءُ مِن عِبَادِهِ ۝ وَلَوْ أُشْرَكْتُمْ لَحَبِّتُ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

This is the guidance of Allāh with which He guides whomever He wills of His worshipers. If they were to join other gods with Him, all that they did would be of no benefit to them.

[Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:88]

Allāh says:

وَلَقَدْ أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَيْنَ أَشْرَكْتُ لَيْحَبِّتُ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۖ بِلِ اللَّهِ فَاعْبَدُ۝ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاَكِرِينَ

But it has already been revealed to you, as it was to those before you: If you were to join (gods with Allāh) in worship, truly fruitless will be your deeds (in life), and you will surely be among the losers. Nay! But worship Allāh (alone), and be among the grateful.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:65-66]
Shirk is the worst sin ever and the most dangerous one. Shirk is to equalize others with Allāh in matters particular to Allāh alone.

THE SECOND NULLIFIER

Whoever Takes Mediators Between Oneself and Allāh For the Purposes of Invoking, Seeking Assistance, and Trusting in Them, is Unanimously Judged to Be a Disbeliever

This nullifier is enveloped within the first one. However, it is treated independently due to its frequent occurrence. Whoever takes mediators between oneself and Allāh for the purposes of invoking them in order to bring good or repel harm, seeking their intercession in the grave or in the state of absence, and trusting in them, then this person is unanimously judged to be a disbeliever. This consensus is held by Muslim scholars from among the Companions, their successors, and the leaders of guidance like the mufāsirūn (Qur'ān commentators), hadith scholars, and jurists. This prohibition is common among the messages of all the prophets.

Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah commented on the aforementioned consensus: “Whoever takes angels and messengers as mediators in order to invoke them and ask them to bring good, repel harm, or dispel sorrow, is judged to be a disbeliever by the consensus of the Muslims.”

Allāh says:

وَيَعْفَدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّ هُمَّ وَلَا يَنفَعُ هُمَّ

وَيَقُولُونَ هُؤُلَاءِ شَفَاعَةُ عَنْدَ اللَّهِ فَلَأَتَبَيْنِ اللَّهُ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ سَبِيعَةً وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا

27 Majmū’ al-Fatāwā (1/124).
They serve, besides Allāh, things that hurt them not, nor profit them, and they say, “These are our intercessors with Allāh.” Say: “Do you indeed inform Allāh of something He knows not in the heavens or on earth? Glory to Him! And far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him)!"

[Sūrah Yūnus 10:18]

So Allāh described the act cited in the aforementioned verse to be shirk even though its perpetrators call it “intercession”; they instead claim it is not shirk—shirk is restricted to idol worshiping (according to them) and they do not do so.

Truly, this is disgraceful ignorance, because idol worshiping is nothing more than a type of shirk. As for the general scope of shirk, it covers the worship of anything besides Allāh, be it an idol, a tree, a stone, a grave, a pious individual, or an angel. All such actions are classified as shirk, so it cannot be narrowed down to just idol worshiping.

Shaykh-ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, “Crossing the line beyond the prescribed norms, by over-glorifying a prophet or righteous individual and believing that he possesses any of the characteristics of divinity, is disbelief. Consider an invocation like, ‘O my lord so-and-so, grant me victory, help me, provide me with sustenance,’ and the ilk of such invocations; all of these are outright shirk and misguidance, and whoever perpetrates them must be preached to repentance, after which he is released, if he complies. Otherwise, he is destined to be killed.”

Ibn al-Qayyim said, “From the types of shirk is asking for needs from dead people, seeking help from them and invoking them; this very type is the root of all the shirk found in the world. The dead person is deceased and totally incapable of aiding himself, let alone aiding others who seek him. Therefore, doing so reflects ignorance of

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the dead person whom he asks to intercede for him and the one to whom intercession is beseeched.”

Aṣ-Ṣanʿāni Ḥḍ said in Tābir al-Ītiqād, “Whoever believes that a tree, a stone, a grave, an angel, a jinn, or an alive or dead person can bring good or repel harm, draw the person close to Allāh, or intercede on his behalf in one of the needs of the worldly life before Allāh the Almighty, such a person has associated partners with Allāh and believed in what is forbidden for him to believe in. This is identical to the disbelievers when they believed in their idols.”

THE THIRD NULLIFIER
Refraining From Holding Disbelievers as Such, Whose Disbelief is Crystal-Clear in the Qur'ān and Sunnah

[This applies] whether the disbeliever is Jewish, Christian, Magian, a polytheist, or an atheist, and so forth. Additionally, the person is to be judged a disbeliever if he sustains doubts regarding the disbelief of disbelievers or if he even attempts to provide justification for their disbelief.

The reason they are disbelievers is that Allāh judged those disbelievers to be such, while he who does not hold them to be disbelievers rudely stands against Allāh and His Messenger, as he has not followed their lead. Sustaining doubts and providing justification for the disbelief of disbelievers also falls into the same category; such an attitude openly opposes Allāh.

Thus, it is obligatory upon Muslims to hold those whom Allāh called disbelievers as such, as well as polytheists. The Muslim must disavow himself from any disbeliever exactly as Ibrāhīm ﷺ did with his father

29 Majmū' al-Fatāwā (3/395).
30 Tābir al-Ītiqād (60).
and his people:

\[
\text{"Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him (i.e., I worship none except Allāh alone) Who did create me; and verily, He will guide me."}
\]

[Sūrah az-Zukhruf 43:26-27]

Additionally, providing justification for their disbelief is even more serious and repulsive. For instance, maintaining that their actions (that are based on disbelief) are to be examined from a different perspective, or that those so-called disbelievers only take those means to reach out to Allāh. Or creating an excuse for those disbelievers, that whatever they do is out of ignorance.

This person, the subject of this nullifier, stands to defend disbelievers; such a person’s disbelief is graver than the original ones because he sustains doubts or tries to provide undue justification for disbelief or polytheism.

Allāh the Almighty says:

\[
\text{"Verily, those who disbelieve (in the religion of Islām, the Qur'an, and the Prophet Muḥammad) from among the People of the Scripture and al-mushrikūn will abide in the Fire of Hell. They are the worst of creatures."}
\]

[Sūrah al-Bayyinah 98:6]

"The People of the Scripture" are the Jews and the Christians. "Al-mushrikūn" are those who associate others with Allāh in worship.
Allāh the Almighty says:

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لَقَدْ كَفَرْ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ قَالَوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الصَّمِيعُ الْمُمِينُ مِمَّمَّنَ
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Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allāh is the Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary).

[Sūrah al-Mā‘idah 5:17]

Allāh the Almighty says:

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لَقَدْ كَفَرْ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ قَالَوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثُ نِصْرَانَ
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Surely, disbelievers are those who said, “Allāh is the third of the three (in a Trinity).”

[Sūrah al-Mā‘idah 5:73]

Allāh the Almighty says:

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إِنَّ الْذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَرِيدُونَ أنْ يَفْرَقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نَؤُمِّنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضِ وَيَرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَخَادَعَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا كَأَنْ أَوَّلِيكَ هُمُ الَّذِينَ مَكَارِهُمْ حَقًا وَأَعْمَلُونَ لِلَّذِينَ مُؤَذِّنِينَ غَنَّا مُهِينًا
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Verily, those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and wish to make a distinction between Allāh and His messengers (by believing in Allāh and disbelieving in His messengers), saying, “We believe in some but reject others,” and wish to adopt a way in between. They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment.

[Sūrah an-Nisā’ 4:150-151]

Allāh the Almighty says:

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إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَاعِلُ النَّافِقِينَ وَالكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا
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Surely, Allâh will gather the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell.

[Sûrah an-Nisâ' 4:140]

THE FOURTH NULLIFIER
Believing That There is a Guidance Better and More Perfect Than That of the Prophet ﷺ and That Others’ Judgment/Rulership is Better Than the Prophet’s Judgment

Such belief appears in those who prefer the rulership of tyrants over that of Allâh. Whoever believes that it is lawful to govern with other than the Islamic legislation in dealings, punishments, and so on, even if this individual does believe that shari‘ah is superior, has legitimized what Allâh has prohibited unanimously. Thus, he committed a nullifier of lâ ilâha ill-Allâh.

Similarly, whoever believes that the ruling of Allâh regarding cutting off the hand of the thief or stoning the married adulterer does not fit the present time has nullified lâ ilâha ill-Allâh. Furthermore, whoever believes that the regulations of man-made laws are superior to the Islamic legislation, or that the rulings of Islam are not befitting for the contemporary era, or that Islam is one of the reasons behind the backwardness of the Muslims, or that the scope of Islam is restricted to the relations between the individual and the deity and does not cover other life affairs, has nullified lâ ilâha ill-Allâh.

Moreover, whoever legitimizes what Allâh and His messengers have forbidden regarding matters whose rulings are religiously known by necessity, like adultery, usury, wine, and so on, is a disbeliever, as affirmed by the unanimous agreement of the Muslims.

Allâh the Almighty says:
Do they then seek the judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance? And who is better in judgment than Allāh for a people who have firm faith.

[Sūrah al-Māʾidah 5:50]

Allāh the Almighty says:

And whosoever does not judge by what Allāh has revealed, such are the kāfirūn (i.e., disbelievers—of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allāh’s laws).

[Sūrah al-Māʾidah 5:44]

Allāh (Glorified be He) says:

Truly, the religion with Allāh is Islām.

[Sūrah Āl ʿImrān 3:19]

Allāh the Almighty says:

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islām, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

[Sūrah Āl ʿImrān 3:85]

Allāh (Glorified be He) says:
Surely! Those who disbelieved in Our āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allāh is Ever Most Powerful, All Wise.”

[Sūrah an-Nisā’ 4:56]

And Allāh the Almighty says:

But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (O Muḥammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.

[Sūrah an-Nisā’ 4:65]

The act of empowering Allāh’s legislation above all others is, in itself, an act of worship, whereas empowering the legislation of others is an act of polytheism.

Allāh says:
Or have they partners with Allāh (false gods) who have instituted for them a religion that Allāh has not allowed?

[Sūrah ash-Shūrā 42:21]

Allāh says:

وَإِنَّا أَطْعَمْنَاهُمْ إِنْكَمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

If you were to obey them, you would indeed be polytheists.

[Sūrah al-Anʿām 5:121]

Allāh says:

أَتَحْذَّرُوا أَحَمَّارَهُمْ وَرَهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسِيِّبَ

ابن مَرْيَمْ وَمَا أُمِّرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبَدُوا إِلَهَاهُ اِلَّهَ وَاحِدًا ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

سَبَحَانَهُ عَظِيمًا يُشْرِكُونَ

They take their priests and their rabbis to be their lords besides Allāh, and (they take as their Lord) the Messiah, the son of Maryam, while they were commanded to worship but one God: there is none that has the right to be worshiped in truth except He. Praise and glory to Him, (far is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him).

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:31]

Allāh called the previous action polytheism; anyone who equalizes between Allāh’s rulership and the rulership of others and declares both of them to be equal is a disbeliever.

Another, more serious situation is if one believes that ruling by what Allāh has not ordained is superior to ruling by what Allāh has ordained. Whoever claims that the current ruling systems are more befitting for the people of the contemporary era while the Islamic law
is not suitable for them because it is not applicable in the present day and does not keep abreast with the evolving civilization, and therefore, we must keep pace with the progressing world, and the Muslims’ court must be identical to the rest of the developed world, such belief is disbelief.

However, for the ruler who governs with what Allâh has not ordained out of self-desire or ignorance, yet who believes that Allâh’s ordainment is superior and imperative, such conduct is regarded as a major sin and is not classified as major disbelief (i.e., that which expels the individual from the fold of Islâm).

THE FIFTH NULLIFIER

Hatred for What the Messenger of Allâh Was Sent With, Even if the Individual is Acting Upon It

Allâh says:

But those who disbelieve (in the oneness of Allâh—Islamic monotheism), for them is destruction, and (Allâh) will make their deeds vain. That is because they hate what Allâh has sent down (this Qur‘ân and Islamic laws, etc.); so He has made their deeds fruitless.

[Sûrah Mu‘âammad 47:8-9]

Allâh the Almighty says:
Verily, those who have turned back (have apostatized) as disbelievers after the guidance has been manifested to them—the Shaytān has beautified for them (their false hopes), and (Allāh) prolonged their term (age). This is because they said to those who hate what Allāh has sent down, “We will obey you in part of the matter.” Except Allāh knows their secrets. Then how (will it be) when the angels take their souls at death, smiting their faces and their backs? That is because they followed what angered Allāh and hated what pleased Him. So He made their deeds fruitless.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:25-28]

As a matter of fact, love for là ilāha ill-Allāh is among its conditions, including love for its requirements, its adopters, and whoever applies it; if anyone violates this condition, he has consequently nullified là ilāha ill-Allāh, even if he is practicing it. Even though he is practicing while harboring hatred and detestation for it, this is disbelief in Allāh, which is a nullifier of là ilāha ill-Allāh.

To sum up, hatred for whatever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was sent with is deemed apostasy, even if the individual applies it. Allāh says:

[Selah]

That is because they hate what Allāh has sent down (this Qur’ān and Islamic laws, etc.), so He has made their deeds fruitless.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:9]
The disbelief here is caused by the hatred concealed in the heart, even if one is practicing in public what he hates.

THE SIXTH NULLIFIER

Mocking Allāh, His Messenger, the Qur'ān, or Any of the Islamic Rituals

Whoever mocks Allāh, the Messenger, the Qur'ān, the religion, the angels, the scholars (due to their knowledge), or any of the Islamic rituals like prayer, zakāh, fasting, Ḥajj, circumambulation around the Ka‘bah, or standing at ‘Arafah, or the masjid, adhān, beard, or the Prophetic Sunnah and so on, is a disbeliever.

Allāh says:

وَلَاتِ سَأَلَتِهِمْ لِيُقْلُونَ إِنَّا كَانَ نَخْوُضُونَ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أُبَيْنِي وَآيَاتِي وَرَسُولِي كَتَبْنَا تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ لاَ تُعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْنَا بِعَدَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ

If you ask them (about this), they declare, “We were only talking idly and joking.” Say: “Was it at Allāh and His āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger that you were mocking?” Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others amongst you because they were muṣrīmūn (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc.).

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:65-66]

So whoever mocks any of what the Messenger ﷺ was sent with, whether it is an obligation, an imperative, or a Sunnah, is an apostate.
Verily! (During the worldly life) those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed. And, whenever they passed by them, used to wink to one another (in mockery). And when they returned to their own people, they would return jesting; and when they saw them, they said, “Verily these have indeed gone astray!” But they (disbelievers, sinners) had not been sent as watchers over them (the believers). But this Day (the Day of Resurrection) those who believe will laugh at the disbelievers, on (high) thrones, looking (at all things). Are not the disbelievers paid (fully) for what they used to do?

[Sūrah al-Muṭaffīfīn 83:29-36]

Allāh the Almighty says:

When you see men engaged in a false conversation about Our verses, turn away from them until they turn to a different topic. If the Shaytān ever makes you forget, then after recollection sit not you in the
company of those who do wrong.

[Sūrah al-An‘ām 6:68]

Allāh the Almighty says:

وَفَئَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتَ اللَّهِ يُكْفِرُ ّيْهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأَا بِهَا فَلا تَقْعَدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّى يَحْوَضُوا فِي حَدِيثِ غَيْرِهِ إِنَّهُمْ إِذَا مَلَأَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ ّمَا فَتَائِهِمْ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَّالِمَ ّجَمِيعًا (1)

And it has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allāh being denied and mocked, you are not to sit with them unless they turn to a different topic; (but if you stayed with them) you would be like them. Surely, Allāh will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:140]

Allāh the Almighty says:

ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يَعْظَمُ حُرُمَاتِ اللَّهِ فَهُمْ خَيْرُهَا عَنْدَ رَبِّهِ (2)

That (manāṣik—prescribed duties of Hajj, is the obligation that mankind owes to Allāh) and whoever honors the sacred things of Allāh, then that is better for him with his Lord.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:30]

Allāh the Almighty says:

ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يَعْظَمُ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَفْوَى الْقُلُوبِ (3)

Such (is his state); and whosoever holds in honor the symbols of Allāh, (in the sacrifice of animals), such (honor) should come truly from piety of heart.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:32]
THE SEVENTH NULLIFIER

Magic

Among its kinds are sarf and ‘atf. Sarf is a magical act meant to prevent someone from proceeding to good deeds or to create disaffection between the husband and his wife, whereas ‘atf is a magical act meant to create a spirit of endearment between a man and a woman.

Allah says:

وَمَا كَفَّرَ شَيْيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَائِمَ كَفَّرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ وَمَا أُنْزِيلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكِينَ يَبَابِيلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمُونَ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولُ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِي نَقْصٍ فَلاَ تَكْفُرُوا

Sulaymān did not disbelieve, but the shayātīn (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Hārūt and Mārūt, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, “We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).”

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:102]

‘Abdullāh bin Mas‘ūd said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

إِنَّ الْرَّقِيَّ وَ الْنَّشْمَاءِمُ وَ الْتَّوْلِيَّةُ شَرِّكٌ.

Spells, amulets, and love potions are shirk.31

“Spells” in this ḥadīth means the forbidden ones that seek the assis-

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31 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd (3838), Ibn Mājah (3530), Aḥmad (3604), at-Ṭabarānī in Al-Mujām al-Awsāt (2/119), Ibn Ḥibbān in his Ṣaḥīh (6090), al-Bayhaqi in As-Sunan al-Kubra (9/350), and al-Ḩakim (4/463); rendered saḥīh (authentic) by al-Ālāmī in as-Sibīl lab as-Ṣaḥīḥab (331).
tance of devils, or the ones that are not understandable.

Amulets [were] beads that the Arabs used to hang on their children to guard them against envy, as they believed; however, Islam invalidated such action.

Love potions are a kind of magic that endears the wife to her husband and agitates her lust.

Magic truly exists, and its harmful effect must coincide with the divine will, as Allah says:

\[
\text{قَيْرَالْقَوْمِ مَثَلًا مَا يَقْرَأُونَ بِهِ تَبْنِيَ الْمَّرْعَةَ وَرَوْحَيْهَا وَمَا هُمُ الْضَّارِئُينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِذَٰلِكَ الْلَّهُ}
\]

And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:102)]

The harmful effect of magic is definite, but it is deniable by a stubborn person or by a disbeliever in what was revealed upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. As for the magician, if his magic is taught by devils as the verse in Sūrah al-Baqarah mentioned, then he is a disbeliever.

Allah says:

\[
\text{وَمَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقْوَلَ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِيّتَةً فَلاَ تَكْفُرُونَ فَيَتَعْلَمُونَ مَثَلًا مَا يَقْرَأُونَ بِهِ تَبْنِيَ الْمَّرْعَةَ وَرَوْحَيْهَا وَمَا هُمُ الْضَّارِئُينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِذَٰلِكَ الْلَّهُ وَيَعْلَمُونَ مَا يَضْرُبُوهُ وَلَا يَفْعَلُوهُ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْوَاهُ لَمَّا إِسْتَشْرَأَ مَّا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلاَقٍ وَلَيْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ}
\]
But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, “We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).” And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allāh’s leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:102]

So, learning and teaching magic are both deemed disbelief in Allāh and a kind of apostasy. If the magician was a Muslim and then became a magician, he is considered an apostate.

Allāh says:

وَمَا يُعَلِّمَا مِنْ أَحَدِ حَتَّى يَقُولُ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِي عِبَادَتِنَا فَلاَ تَكُفُّرُونَ

But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, “We are only for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).”

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:102]

Magic requires working with devils, developing attachment to them, and drawing oneself close to them by doing what pleases them. In addition, it implies an allegation of knowing the unseen and sharing with Allāh in this feature, which is utter misguidance and disbelief.

The Prophet ﷺ has connected magic with disbelief. It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

اجْتَبِئُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُوَيَّقَاتِ. قَالُوا: يا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَمَا هَنَّ قَالُ الْشَّرْكُ بِاللَّهِ،
“Avoid the seven noxious things.” It was said (by those who heard), “What are they, O Messenger of Allāh?” He replied, “Associating anything with Allāh, magic, killing one whom Allāh has declared inviolate without a just cause, consuming the property of an orphan, consuming usury, turning back when the army advances, and slandering chaste women who are believers, but unaware.”

THE EIGHTH NULLIFIER

Aiding the Disbelievers & Supporting Their Scheme Against the Muslims

“Aiding” here means cooperation; “supporting their scheme against the Muslims” means assisting them in fighting the Muslims and harming them.

It is noteworthy that whoever loves the disbelievers is a disbeliever; this part is the one that means taking the disbelievers as “friends.”

Allāh says:

وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مَنْ خَالفَ مِنْهُمْ

And if any amongst you takes them (disbelievers) as awliyā’ (friends), then surely he is one of them.

[Sūrah al-Māʾ idah 5:51]

By taking them as friends, as shown by supporting, cooperating with, or loving them, this person has become a disbeliever, as he loves disbelief and the disbelievers.

32 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (2615) and Muslim (89).
Allāh the Almighty says:

وَمَن يَتَّبِعُونَهُمْ مَنْ كَفَّارٍ مَثْلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقُوْمَ الْظَّالِمِينَ

And if any amongst you takes them as awliyā', then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allāh guides not those people who are the zālimūn (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:51]

Allāh the Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْدُّنْيَاَ اللَّدُنِينَ أَمَّنُوا إِنَّ تَطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْذِّنِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ يُؤْذَعُوْنَ بَعْدًا إِبَاحَتَمْ كَافِرِينَ وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأُنْتُمْ نَتَّلِئُونَ عَلَيْكُمُ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَمَن يَعْتَصِمُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى سَرِّاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

O you who believe! If you obey a group of those who were given the scripture (Jews and Christians), they would (indeed) render you disbelievers after you have believed! And how would you disbelieve, while unto you are recited the verses of Allāh, and among you is His Messenger (Muhammad)? And whoever holds firmly to Allāh, (i.e., follows Islām, Allāh’s religion, and obeys all that Allāh has ordered, practically), then he is indeed guided to a Right Path.

[Sūrah Āli ʿImrān 3:100-101]
O you who believe! If you obey those who disbelieve, they will send you back on your heels, and you will turn back (from faith) as losers. Nay, Allāh is your Mawlā (Patron, Lord, Helper, Protector), and He is the best of helpers.

[Ṣūrah Āl ʿĪmārān 3:149-150]

Allāh (Glorified be He) says:

"O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies (i.e., the disbelievers and polytheists, etc.) as friends, showing affection towards them, while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth (i.e., Islamic monotheism, this Qur'ān, and Muḥammad), and have driven out the Messenger (Muḥammad) and yourselves (from your homeland) because you believe in Allāh your Lord! If you have come forth to strive in My cause and to seek My good pleasure, (then take not these disbelievers and polytheists, etc., as your friends). You show friendship to them in secret, while I am All-Aware of what
you conceal and what you reveal. And whosoever of you (Muslims) does that, then indeed he has gone (far) astray, (away) from the Straight Path. Should they gain the upper hand over you, they would behave to you as enemies, and stretch forth their hands and their tongues against you with evil, and they desire that you should disbelieve.

[Sūrah al-Mumtaḥanah 60:1-2]

Allāh the Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبَعُوا فَوْقَمًا غَضَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ نَيَسَّرُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا نَيَسَّرَ الْكَفَارُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْقَبْرِ

O you who believe! Take not as friends the people who incurred the wrath of Allāh (i.e., the Jews). Surely, they have been in despair to receive any good in the Hereafter, just as the disbelievers have been in despair about those (buried) in graves (that they will not be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection).

[Sūrah al-Mumtaḥanah 60:13]

"O you who believe" refers to those who believe in Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh is advising them not to take as friends the people who incurred Allāh’s wrath due to their disbelief.

"They have been in despair" from Allāh’s reward in the Hereafter like the buried disbelievers have been in despair from Allāh’s mercy in the Hereafter, when they have witnessed the truth and know certainly that they have no chance in the Hereafter.
THE NINTH NULLIFIER

Believing That Anybody is Allowed to Rebel Against the Shari‘ah of Muḥammad ﷺ as al-Khiḍr Did With Mūsā ﷺ

Whoever allows anyone to rebel against the shari‘ah of Muḥammad ﷺ is a disbeliever, because Allāh the Almighty sent His Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ to all of humanity and He has obligated obeying him over the world.

So whoever does not obey and follow what the Prophet ﷺ was sent with is a disbeliever, whether he is Jewish, Christian, or Magian, including every single religion, because from the first minute the Prophet’s mission started, obeying and following him was imperative. Additionally, his mission abrogated Judaism and Christianity. Therefore, no one is allowed to rebel against his shari‘ah.

It is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

والذي نفس مَحْمَد يَبْدِه لا يسمع بي أحد من هذه الأمة يهدئ ويلا نصراني ثم يموت ولم يؤمن بالذي أرسلته يهلا كان من أصحاب النار.

By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muḥammad, he amongst the community of Jews or Christians who hears about me but does not affirm his belief in what I have been sent with and dies in this state (of disbelief) shall be but one of the denizens of the Hellfire.

As for al-Khiḍr’s case, Mūsā was not sent to al-Khiḍr; he was sent specifically to the Children of Israel only, as Allāh the Almighty says:

езд قال موسى ليقوم بيقوم لم تؤمن وفد تعلمون

33 Recorded by Muslim (153).
And (remember) when Mūsā (Moses) said to his people, “O my people! Why do you hurt me while you know certainly that I am the messenger of Allāh to you?”

[Sūrah al-ʾĀṣim 61:5]

So Mūsā’s message was exclusively to the Children of Israel. However, al-Khīdr was a devoted worshiper of Allāh; scholars differed regarding whether he was a prophet or a righteous man. So, by means of deduction, al-Khīdr breached the shariʿah of Mūsā because he was not from the Children of Israel for whom Mūsā was sent; [Mūsā] was not sent to all of humanity.

On the contrary, the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad ﷺ, was sent to all of humanity; thus, no one can rebel against his shariʿah. This illustration rebuts the Ṣūfī claim that they reach into a state in which they no longer need to follow the Prophet, and in which they have a direct link to Allāh and they need no more from the Messenger.

Moreover, they maintain that messengers are sent for laymen only; as for the elite, they stand free of need from the messengers. Consequently, they neither pray nor fast, and further, they breach the shariʿah based on the previous false allegation. This is an awful breach of the profession of tawhīd and straying away from the religion of Allāh.

Allāh the Almighty says:

قَلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ

Say (O Muḥammad): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allāh.”

[Sūrah al-ʾĀṣim 7:158]

Allāh the Almighty says:
And We have sent you (O Muḥammad) not but as a mercy for the ʿalāmīn (mankind, jinn, and all that exists).

[Sūrah al-Anbiyāʾ 21:107]

Allāh the Almighty says:

وَمَا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَّا رَحْمَتَ الْغُلَامِينَ

Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion (of right and wrong, i.e., this Qur'ān) to His slave (Muḥammad) that he may be a warner to the ʿalāmīn (mankind and jinn).

[Sūrah al-Furqān 25:1]

Allāh the Almighty says:

وَمَا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَّا كَافِئًا لِلْنَاسِ بِشِرْرَا وَنَذِيرًا وَلِكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُعِلَّمُونَ

And We have not sent you (O Muḥammad) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not.

[Sūrah Sabāʾ 34:28]

Jābir bin ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

أُعْطِيتُ خَمْسَةَ لَمْ يُعْطِهِهَا أَحَدُ قَبْلِي كَانَ كُلُّ نَيْبٍ يُعْطَى إِلَى فَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً وُعَسَّتُ إِلَى كُلِّ أَحْمَرٍ وَأَسْوَدٍ وَأُجْلَتْ لِيَ الْحَقَائِقَ وَلَمْ نُحْلَ لَأَحْدَ قَبْلِي وَجُبِعَتْ لِيَ الْأَرْضُ طَهُورًا وَمَسْجِدًا فَأَلِمُوُيَا رَجُلٌ أَذْرَكَهُ الْصَّلَاةُ صَلِّي حَيْثُ كَانَ وُصِرَتْ بِالْرَّضُّ بِنَيْنَ يَدَّ إِمْسِرَةُ شَهْرٍ وَأُعْطِيتُ الشَّفَاعَةَ.
I have been given five (things) that were not granted to anyone before me: Every prophet was sent particularly to his own people, whereas I have been sent to all the red and the black (people); the spoils of war have been made lawful for me, and these were never made lawful to anyone before me; the earth has been made sacred and pure and a mosque for me, so whenever the time of prayer comes for any one of you, he should pray wherever he is; I have been supported by awe (by which the enemy is overwhelmed) from the distance (that takes) one month to cover; and I have been granted intercession.\(^{34}\)

And in a different narration recorded by Muslim, Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَأَلْحَقَّ كَافِهَةَ وَحُتِيمَ بَيْنَ الْيَتِّيْحَ

I have been given superiority over the other prophets in six respects: I have been given words that are concise but comprehensive in meaning; I have been helped by terror (in the hearts of enemies); spoils have been made lawful to me; the earth has been made clean and a place of worship for me; I have been sent to all of mankind; and the line of prophets is closed by me.\(^{35}\)

Allāh the Almighty says:

«إنَّ الدِّينَ عندَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ»

Truly, the religion with Allāh is Islām.

[Sūrah Āl ʿImrān 3:19]

Allāh the Almighty says:

وَمَنْ يَتَّبَعْ عَيْنَ الإِسْلَامِ دَيْنًا فَلَنْ يُقَبَّلَ مَنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي

\(^{34}\) Agreed upon: Recorded by al-Bukhāri (335) and Muslim (521).

\(^{35}\) Recorded by Muslim (523).
And whoever seeks a religion other than Islām, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.

[Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān 3:85]

Allāh the Almighty says:

Do they seek other than the religion of Allāh (the true Islamic monotheism—worshiping none except Allāh alone), while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned.

[Sūrah Āl ‘Imran 3:83]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

By Allāh, if Mūsā was alive, he would follow me.\(^{36}\)

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**THE TENTH NULLIFIER**

Turning Away From the Religion of Allāh

Turning away means neither learning the religion nor acting in accordance with it.

The form of turning away meant as the nullifier here is the complete

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\(^{36}\) Recorded by ʿAbd al-Rahmān bin ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭaṭir (14220) and it was graded as *ḥasan* by al-Albānī in *Mukhtasar al-`Uluwūr* (60) and in *Irwāʾ* (1589).
abandonment of learning the fundamental principles of the religion that color the individual with the Islamic identity, even if the person is ignorant regarding the details of the religion, which are, for the most part, the duty of scholars and students of knowledge. However, turning away from learning the fundamental principles that color the individual with the Islamic identity is a nullifier of là ilaha ill-Allah.

Allâh the Almighty says:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَمَّا أَنْذَرُوا مُعَرَّضُونَ

But those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.

[Sûrah al-Ahqâf 46:3]

Allâh the Almighty says:

وَمَنْ أَظَلَّ مَعَهُ مَنْ ذَكَرَ الْأَيَّاتِ رَبِّهِ شُفِّيَ مِنَ الْمُجَرَّمِينَ مُتَّقِمُونَ

And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the āyât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then disregards them? Verily, We shall exact retribution from the mujrimûn (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, etc.).

[Sûrah as-Sajdah 32:22]

Allâh says:

وَمَنْ أَعَرَضَ عَنِ الْذِّكْرِ فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةٌ ضَنكَةٌ وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَالِهِ

But whosoever turns away from My reminder (i.e., neither believes in this Qur’ân nor acts on its orders, etc.) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall
raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.

[Sūrah Ṭā-Hā 20:124]

Allāh the Almighty says:

If any do turn away from My reminder, verily they will bear a burden on the Day of Resurrection. They will abide in that (state), and grievous will the burden be with them on that Day.

[Sūrah Ṭā-Hā 20:99-101]

Turning away from the religion is identified by acting careless towards it, being reluctant to learn it, and—even if the process of learning took place—not acting in accordance with such knowledge. So whoever turns away from learning and implementing the religion of Allāh and paying it due attention is an apostate, and the proof is:

And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then disregards them? Verily, We shall exact retribution from the mujrimūn (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners).

[Sūrah as-Sajdah 32:22]

The individual in question has turned away from the proofs and signs after the reminder, in contrast to the one who turned away out of reluctance, who is not to be judged as a disbeliever, although he is reprimanded for the reluctance. The kind of turning away that classi-
fies its perpetrator as a disbeliever is the one in which there is an obvious unwillingness to learn the religion or there is a hatred for knowledge—Allāh forbid.

Ultimately, the aforementioned [points] are the nullifiers, conditions, and meaning of la ilāha ill-Allāh. Those nullifiers expel its perpetrator from the fold of Islām, which eventually lands him in the Hellfire.

Imām Muḥammad bin ‘Abdul-Wahhāb said, “Those nullifiers are applicable to any person, with no distinction between the serious one, the jester, or the one who is afraid, except in the case of coercion. All nullifiers are extremely critical and occur at an excessive frequency. Therefore, the Muslim should always be on alert and be afraid that he might commit them; we seek refuge with Allāh from committing what brings His wrath and His severe punishment.”

So, basically, there is no distinction in committing these nullifiers between a serious person who is fully aware of his actions and the jester who commits it unintentionally out of jest and humor. This is a proof against the Murji‘ah, who hold that the jester is to be exempted from the previous verdict unless a firm belief of what he said is confirmed in his heart.

However, there is no distinction whatsoever between a serious person, a jester, or a person who is afraid to lose his prestige and wealth if any of them commits any nullifier. The only exception applies in the state of coercion—if an individual is forced to voice the word of disbelief, and the only escape from such oppression is voicing the word of disbelief, then Allāh has sanctioned the person to do so.

Allāh says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَّى إِيمَانَهُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَكَرَّ إِلاَّ مَنْ أَكَرَّ وَقَلِيلُهُ مُطْمَئِنُّ

Whoever disbelieved in Allāh after his belief, except

37 From the treatise The Nullifiers of Islam, explained by Shaykh al-Fawzān (p. 35).
he who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest
with faith...

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:106]

This person’s heart is unequivocally in complete comfort with faith; voicing the word of disbelief is just a means to ward off the inflicted coercion.

Allāh says:

وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ سَعَوْبَهُمُ ۖ لَيْقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخْوَضُونَ وَنَلْعِبُ ۖ قُلْ أَلَمْ يَرُدُّوا قَلْبَهُمْ لِأَلَّلَهِ وَأَبَايْهُ وَرَسُولِهِ كَثِيرًآ ۖ لَا تَتَّرَبَّصُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بِعَدْدٍ إِيمَانِكُمْ

If you ask them (about this), they declare, “We were only talking idly and joking.” Say: “Was it at Allāh, and His āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger ἡ ἂ that you were mocking?” Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:65-66]

And the proof regarding those who have to pronounce disbelief under duress is:

ۚ مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهِ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطَّمَّعٌ

بالإِيْمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَّحَ بِالْكَفُّ صَدًّارًا فَعَلَّفَهُمْ غَضَبَ مَنْ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

Whoever disbelieved in Allāh after his belief, except he who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with faith; but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is wrath from Allāh, and theirs will be a great torment.

[Sūrah an-Nahl 16:106]
So the Muslim must always be alert and afraid that he might get tainted due to the frequency of the nullifiers. There are other nullifiers of la ilaha ill-Allah beyond the ones mentioned earlier; however, they are related to those ten (mentioned) in one way or another. We seek Allah’s refuge from misguidance and going astray.
The Virtues of Lâ Ilâha Ill-Allâh & The Excellence of Repeating It in Remembrance

Verily, bearing witness to Allâh's oneness is the most glorious of statements, as it is centered on the most glorious entity—Allâh. Allâh's own testimony to His Almighty Self is sufficient on the topic of the virtues of lâ ilâha ill-Allâh. Allâh followed His own testimony by that of the best of His creation.

Allâh says:

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَقِّ الْعَلِيمُ قَانِئًا بالقُسْطِ لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

Allâh bears witness that lâ ilâha illâ Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped except He), and the angels and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in justice. Lâ ilâha illâ Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped except He), the All Mighty, the All Wise.

[Sûrah Âlî ‘Imrân 3:18]

So Allâh the Exalted has called Himself to witness and indeed, He is
the best witness; then He followed it with the testimony of the best of His creation (i.e., His angels and scholars). They all testified to the most glorified and greatest testimony ever, which is là ilāha illā Huwa.

The profession of tawhīd is the best that came out of the prophets’ mouths as narrated in the following hadith. ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

خَلَّفَهَا مَنْ قَالَ أَنَا وَالْيَهُودَةُ مِنْ قَبْلِي لَإِنَّا إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَحِدَّةٌ لَا شَرِيكُ لَهُ لَّهُ الْمَلِكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرِيٌّ.

The best of what I and the prophets before me said is, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, alone without partners; to Him belongs all sovereignty and praise and He is, over all things, Omnipotent.”

Là ilāha ill-Allāh is heavier than the heavens and the Earth. ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr said:

كَنَّا جَلَوْسَا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمْ فَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَادِيَةِ عَلَى جَبَلِ سَيْجَانِ حَتَّى قَامَ عَلَى رَأْسِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: إِنِّي صَاحِبُكُمْ قَدْ وَضَعْتُ كُلَّ فَارِسٍ - أَوْ قَالَ: يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَضِعَ كُلَّ فَارِسٍ وَيَرْفَعَ كُلَّ رَأْعٍ، فَأَخْذَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِمَجَاعِمِ جَبَلِهِ فَقَالَ: (أَلَّا أَرْىُ عَلَيْكَ لِبَاسَ مَنْ لَا يَعْقِلُ). ثُمَّ قَالَ: (إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ اللَّهُ نَجَا صَلَّى اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمَّا خَضَرَّتْ لَهُ الْوُفَاقُ، فَقَالَ لابِهِ: إِنِّي قَيْسَ عَلِيَّ الْوُصْيَةَ، آمَرَ بَائِتَنِينَ وَأَنْهَاكَ عَنِ اثْنَيْنِ، آمَرَ بِلَا إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهَ، فَإِنَّ السُّمَاوَاتِ السُّبُعَ وَالأَرْضَينَ السُّبُعَ، لَوْ وَضَعْنَ فِي كَفَّةٍ وَوَضَعْتَ لَا إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهٍ فِي كَفَّةٍ أُرْجِحَتْ يَهُن، لَوْ أَنَّ السُّمَاوَاتِ السُّبُعَ وَالأَرْضَينَ السُّبُعَ كَنْ حَلَقَةٌ مُّبَهَّةٌ لَقَصُصُتْهُ لَا إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَسَيْحَانُ اللَّهُ وَبِحَمَدِهِ فَإِنَّهَا

38 Recorded by at-Ṭirmidhī (3585), and al-Albānī classified it as ḥasan in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘.
We were sitting with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when a Bedouin man wearing a robe with a border approached him until he stood before the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. He said, “Your companion has debased every horseman and elevated every shepherd.” The Prophet ﷺ took hold of the folds of his robe and said, “I see that you are wearing the clothes of someone who is without intelligence.” Then he went on: “The prophet Nūh ﷺ told his son, ‘I will give you some instructions. I command you two things and I forbid you two things. I command you to say là ilāha ill-Allāh. If the seven heavens and the seven earths were a dark ring, they would be cut by là ilāha ill-Allāh and subhānAllāhi wa bi-ḥamdihī (glory be to Allāh and by His praise). It is the prayer of everything, and by it, everything acquires its provison. And I forbid you from associating others with Allāh and being proud.’”

I asked (or it was asked), “O Messenger of Allāh, we know about shirk (associating others with Allāh), but what is pride? Is it that one of us has a robe which he wears?” The Prophet replied, “No.” I asked, “Is it that one of us has a pair of fine sandals with two good straps?” He replied, “No.” I asked, “Is it that one of us has an animal which he rides?” He replied, “No.” I asked, “Is it that one of us has companions who come and sit with him?” He replied, “No.” I asked, “O Messenger of Allāh, so what is pride, then?” He replied, “It is disparaging the truth and being ungrateful to people.”

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39 Recorded by al-Imām Aḥmad in Al-Musnad (6583), al-Bukhārī in Al-Adab al-Mufrad.
“Disparaging the truth” means being ignorant about knowledge and belittling it. “Being ungrateful to people” means scorning, slandering, and depreciating people.

It is reported on the authority of Anas that the Prophet Muhammad said, “Allah, the Most Exalted, said:

"O son of Adam, when you invoke and request from me, I forgive you for what have you done and I don’t care. O son of Adam, if your sins reached to the firmament of the heavens, then you asked me for forgiveness, I would forgive you and I don’t care. O son of Adam, O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with the world full of sins, and meet Me without partnering anything with Me (shirk), I would come to you with a similar amount of forgiveness.”

The Prophet Muhammad, in various hadiths, illuminated the excellence of la ilaha ill-Allah, the virtue of praising Allah with it while applying it, and maintaining truthfulness, sincerity, love, and allegiance upon adopting it. The Prophet Muhammad manifested that la ilaha ill-Allah is the foremost duty upon the Muslim.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs that when the Messenger of Allah sent Mu‘âdh towards Yemen (as governor), he said to him:

إِنَّكَ تَأْتَى قَوْمًا أَهْلٌ كَتَابٍ فَلَيْكَ أُولُوا مَا تَدْعُوْهُمْ إِلَيْهِ شِهَادَةً أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّهُ وَأَنَّيْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ. 

(548), and by al-Bazzâr (2998/3069); check As-Silsilah as-Sahihah (134).

40 Recorded by at-Tirmidhi (3540) and elevated to hasan by al-Albâni in Sahih al-Jâmi’ (4338).
You will soon find yourself in a community, one among the People of the Book, so first call them to testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and that I (Muḥammad) am the Messenger of Allāh.\(^{41}\)

And in another narration, (he said) “to believe in the oneness of Allāh.”\(^{42}\)

Shaykh-ul-İslām ٤٥ said, “It is celebrated in the religion of the Messenger ﷺ, and the ummah has agreed upon it, that the fundamental principle of Islām and the initial obligation upon creation is to testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allāh. This testimony is a door for the disbeliever becoming a Muslim, the enemy becoming a friend, and the one whose life and wealth are violable becoming otherwise. If this testimony is made genuinely from the heart, then this person has become a believer; otherwise, if it is just uttered by the tongue, then this person is covered with the mantle of Islām but devoid of its core faith.”\(^{43}\)

The Prophet’s ﷺ statement to Muʿādh, “So first, call them to testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, and that I (Muḥammad) am the Messenger of Allāh,” implies that it is obligatory to invite people initially to faith and tawḥīd in Allāh, and to believe in His Messenger ﷺ, follow his message, abandon shirk, and avoid disobedience to Allāh; these matters are the most significant requirements of lā ilāha ill-Allāh.

The essence of inviting people to believe in lā ilāha ill-Allāh is proclaiming the intrinsic implied tawḥīd and abandoning shirk in Allāh’s Lordship, oneness, and names and attributes. Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah believe that the first obligation upon the servant is testifying that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and that Muḥammad is His Messenger, and further singling out Allāh with

\(^{41}\) Recorded by al-Bukhārī (1458) and Muslim (19).

\(^{42}\) Recorded by al-Bukhārī (7372).

\(^{43}\) Fath al-Majid (84).
worship.

They have various proofs to substantiate their position; the most crucial one is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ to Mu‘adh when he sent him to Yemen:

إنك تأتي قوماً أهل كتاب فليكون أول ما تدعوهم إليه شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وآتي رسلُ الله.

You will soon find yourself in a community, one among the People of the Book, so first call them to testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh and that I (Muḥammad) am the Messenger of Allâh.

Accordingly, singling out Allâh with tawhîd and declaring an absolute renunciation from shîrk are the foremost obligations and duties upon the Muslim.

Imâm Ibn Abîl-Izz said, “Bear in mind that tawhîd was the number one priority in the da‘wah of the prophets. It is the first step on the path and the first stage in the journey to Allâh. Therefore, it is most proper that the foremost obligation upon the accountable individual is to testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh. This is in contrast to the leading scholars of the objectionable discipline of theology,44 who claim that the foremost obligation upon the individual is contemplation (as a means for recognizing Allâh’s existence).45

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44 Translator's Note: The discipline of theology, in general, is concerned with studying religions. However, its rendition in Arabic (‘ilm al-kalām) has become associated with those who mainly prefer dependency on reason over the authentic statements and evidences from the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Thus, they were strongly criticized by the scholars of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah.

45 Translator's Note: The Shaykh is contending the argument of Ahlus-Sunnah with that of the scholars of theology in relation to the foremost obligation upon the individual for recognizing Allâh’s existence. Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah maintain that the individual’s recognition of Allâh is naturally innate and deeply embedded in the human soul as created by Allâh. This does not necessarily imply that reason is irrelevant and ignored; rather, reason is employed by those whose nature is distorted. On the contrary, scholars of theology maintain that the individual’s recognition of Allâh is acquired, that the person is not created with it. They argue that the foremost obligation upon the individual is embarking
the ability to express Allāh’s existence, and skepticism.”

Those who maintain that “the foremost obligation is contemplation” are the Ash’āriyyah as cited by al-Bāqilānī; those who maintain that it is “the ability to express Allāh’s existence” are al-Juwayni and those who followed him; and “skepticism” is the ideology of the Mu’tazilah as laid down by al-Qādirī ‘Abdul-Jabbār in Al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah. As for Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah, they are unanimously agreed that the foremost obligation upon the individual is the two testimonies.

Imām Ibn Abil-‘Izz said, “All the leaders of the Salaf agreed that the foremost obligation upon the servant is the two testimonies.”

Allāh said to His Prophet:

So know (O Muḥammad) that lā ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh).

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:19]

This means, “O Muḥammad! Know that there is nothing worthy of being worshiped except Allāh.” Allāh says:


46 Sharḥ at-Tahāwiyyah (1/59).
47 Al-Inṣāf (22).
48 Al-Irshād (3).
49 Sharḥ at-Tahāwiyyah (1/60).
And those whom they invoke instead of Him have no power of intercession; except for those who bear witness to the truth knowingly (i.e., believed in the oneness of Allah, and obeyed His orders), and they know (the facts about the oneness of Allah).

[Sūrah az-Zukhruf 43:86]

VIRTUE OF Lâ ILÂHA ILL-ALLÂH:
Maintaining Truthfulness in the Profession of Tawhīd

It is narrated on the authority of Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said:

ما مِنْ أَحَدٍ تَشِهَّدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنْ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَبْدًا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ إِلَّا حُرْمُهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّارِ.

No one testifies that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, believing in it from his heart, except that Allah will forbid Hell for him.⁵⁰

This hadīth includes the condition of truthfulness, which is contrary to lying, among the conditions of lâ ilâha ill-Allâh; it states that the individual must utter the profession with sheer truthfulness of the heart in parallel with utterance of the tongue.

Allâh says:

المُؤَكَّرِينَ ۛ وَلَقَدْ كَفَّارُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيْغَلُّمَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَّقُوا وَلَيْغَلُّمَّ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

⁵⁰ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (128).
Alif-Lām-Mīm. Do people think that they will be left alone on saying, “We believe,” and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them. And Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false.

[Sūrah al-‘ Ankabūt 29:1-3]

And Allah says regarding the hypocrites who lied while saying it:

And of the people, there are some who say, “We believe in Allah and the Last Day,” but they do not (really) believe. They (think to) deceive Allah and those who believe, but they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not! In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:8-10]

Truthfulness entails stripping any divine attribute from anything besides Allah, while affirming it for Him solely without partners; this necessarily requires singling Him out with worship [and believing] that He is One and the Self-Sustaining Deity. Divinity also may include any act of worship made by the heart like love, submission, and compliance to Allah without partners. It is obligatory to single out Allah with invocation, fear, love, trust, repentance, slaughtering, vowing, prostration, and the rest of the acts of worship. This underpins one’s truthfulness in là ilāha ill-Allāh.
VIRTUE OF LÄ ILÄHA ILL-ALLÄH:
The Prophet ﷺ Has Manifested That the Blood and the Money of the One Who Says Lä Iläha Ill-Alläh is Preserved

The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَالَ لَآ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَكَفَرَ بِمَا يُعَبَّدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَرُّ مَالُهُ وَدُمُّهُ وَجَسَّابُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

He who professed that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh and made a denial of everything that the people worship besides Allâh, his property and blood become inviolable, and his affairs rest with Allâh.⁵¹

But the Prophet ﷺ stipulated two conditions for the previously mentioned inviolability of life and wealth:

1) Saying lâ iläha ill-Alläh.

2) Disbelieving in what is worshiped besides Allâh. The Prophet ﷺ made it clear that mere utterance is insufficient; it must be a combination between utterance and implementation.

The previous illustration reveals the essence of lâ iläha ill-Alläh. The inviolability of life and wealth were not made conditional on utterance alone, nor on grasping its meaning combined with uttering it, nor on affirming it, nor on supplicating to Allâh with it without partners; rather, all of these matters must be in one melting pot supplemented with disbeliefing in what is worshiped besides Allâh. Otherwise, if one sustains any doubt regarding any of these things, one’s life and wealth are thereby violable.

Scholars are agreed upon the previous point. The fulfillment of the

⁵¹ Recorded by Muslim (23).
following conditions is required to guarantee the inviolability of life and wealth: *tawhid*, commitment to its rulings, and absolute abandonment of *shirk*. The proof for such issues is the utterance of the two testimonies on the condition of acting in accordance with them. This will guarantee inviolability, and one's deeds will be under inspection for any violation, which, if committed, will meet its consequential punishment.

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**VIRTUE OF Lâ Ilâha Ill-Allâh:**

The Prophet ﷺ Informed Us That Allâh Has Forbidden the Hellfire for Whoever Says *Lâ Ilâha Ill-Allâh* Seeking Nothing By it Except Allâh’s Face

‘Ibân ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ قدْ حَرَّمَ عَلَى الْأُمَّةِ مِنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَتَّعِبُهُ بِذَلِكَ وَجَهَّةَ اللَّهِ.

Indeed, Allâh has forbidden for Hell the person who testifies, “There is nothing worthy of worship except Allâh,” seeking thereby nothing except Allâh’s Face.\(^{52}\)

The Prophet’s statement, “Allâh has forbidden for Hell,” means that this person will not enter Hell, or that Hell is prevented from touching him. “Testifies, “There is nothing worthy of worship except Allâh,” means with the condition of sincerity, which is found in the next phrase, “seeking thereby nothing except Allâh’s Face,” meaning: seeking Allâh’s Face. And serious seeking entails being tirelessly energetic until the desired goal is accomplished.

This *hadîth* is explicitly clear in stipulating implementation for whoever utters *lâ ilâha ill-Allâh*; the Prophet says, “seeking thereby nothing except Allâh’s Face.” This refutes the Murji’ah’s ideology that rules out sincerity and considers the utterance (of *lâ ilâha ill-Allâh*)

\(^{52}\) Recorded by al-Bukhârî (425) and Muslim (33).
to be sufficient. Additionally, it repudiates the Khawārij and the Mu’tazilah—the literal, explicit meaning of the *hadīth* asserts that whoever commits a major sin is not to dwell in the Hellfire for eternity but still deserves a punishment, in contrast to their (the Khawārij and Mu’tazilah) position that sentences the committer of a major sin to the Hellfire for eternity.

Shaykh-ul-Islām Imām Ibn Taymiyyah said, “The seeker of a particular object has to exhaust all the potential means leading to it; exhausting all of them will forsake him from the Hellfire forever. If his good deeds were performed perfectly, this will distance the individual extremely far away from the Hellfire; otherwise, if he falls short, this distance will be shortened depending on the level of failure in his commitment to lā ilāha ill-Allāh. Nevertheless, the element of tawḥīd will factor in, preventing this person from dwelling in the Hellfire for eternity. Likewise, this applies to those who commit adultery, consume intoxicating drinks, or perpetrate theft. If one utters the profession of faith, acknowledging that it is meant sincerely for Allāh, while committing any of the previously mentioned major sins, then this is considered a lie, let alone insincerity.”

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**VIRTUE OF LĀ ILĀHA ILL-ALLĀH:**
Fulfilling the Condition of Knowledge Will Lead to Paradise

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Uthmān that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

\[\text{مَنْ مَاتَ وَ هُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَّلَ الْجَنَّةَ.}
\]

*He who died knowing (fully well) that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh has entered Paradise.*

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53 Quoted from *Al-Qawl al-Mufid* by Shaykh Ibn al-‘Uthaymīn (1/78).
54 Recorded by Muslim.
Understanding the essence of la ilaha ill-Allah is a required condition. This great profession is comprised of disbelieving in tāghūt and having faith in Allah; disbelief in tāghūt necessitates stripping divinity from other than Allah and ascribing it to Allah solely. The word ilah refers to the deity who is merited with worship and obedience. He is not to be disobeyed, due to fear, glorification, love, hope, trust, and the rest of divinity’s features, which are only designated for Allah.

Hence, whoever associates a creature with Allah in any of divinity’s exclusive features has tainted the purity of la ilaha ill-Allah and his own tawḥīd, in addition to worshiping that creature, more or less. The grave worshipers do not grasp the actual essence of la ilaha ill-Allah, nor do they grasp that divinity is solely for Allah, without partners. The only portion they grasped from la ilaha ill-Allah is the one known to believers, disbelievers, and the rest of creation: that Allah is the only Creator and Inventor. They understand that “God” is the one who stands without needing anything besides Him, while everything stands in desperate need of Him.

This is true, and it is obviously entailed by the self-defined “God”; however, it is not the intended meaning of la ilaha ill-Allah, as (this portion) is known to the disbelievers who admitted it. Therefore, grasping the essence of la ilaha ill-Allah is imperative, along with implementing its requirements, in order to profit the one who says it and save him from the Hellfire.

VIRTUE OF LÃ ILÃHA ILL-ALLÃH:
The Most Fortunate Person with the Prophet’s Intercession on the Day of Judgment is the One Who Fulfills the Condition of Sincerity

It is narrated on the authority of Abû Hurayrah that the Prophet said:
The most fortunate person who will have my intercession on the Day of Resurrection will be the one who said sincerely from the bottom of his heart, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allâh.”

And whoever said it while having certainty in it has been given glad tidings of Paradise from the Prophet ﷺ. It is narrated on the authority of Abû Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said:

Anyone you meet behind this wall testifying that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh with full uprightness in his heart, then give him glad tidings of Paradise.

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**VIRTUE OF LÀ ILÂHA ILL-ALLÂH:**
**Là Ilâha Ill-Allâh** is the Highest Rank of Faith

It is narrated on the authority of Abû Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

Faith has over 70 branches or over 60 branches, the most excellent of which is the declaration that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh, and the humblest of which is the removal of what is

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55 Recorded by al-Bukhârî (99).
56 Recorded by Muslim (31).
harmful on the road; and modesty is a branch of faith.\textsuperscript{57}

And the one who fulfills the condition of sincerity will enter Paradise. Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudri narrated that the Prophet said:

من قال لا إله إلا الله مخلصًا دخل الجنة.\

Whoever declared sincerely that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh will enter Paradise.\textsuperscript{58}

Saying \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allâh} with sincerity will open the gates of the heavens until it reaches (leads to) the Throne when the one who said it avoided the major sins. Abû Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said:

ما قال عمرد لا إله إلا الله قط مخلصًا إلا فتبت حته أجناب السماء حتى نفضي إلى العرش ما أجلت الكبائر.\

Any servant who professes \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allâh} with pure sincerity, the gates of Paradise will be opened for him until it reaches the Throne, as long as the servant avoids major sins.\textsuperscript{59}

Whoever professes \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allâh} and disbelieves in whatever is worshiped besides Allâh is guaranteed Paradise. On the authority of Sahl bin Ḥunayf and Zayd bin Khālid, the Prophet said:

بَشَّرَ النَّاسَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَالَ لا إِله إلا الله وَحِدَةَ لا شَريَّكَ لَهُ وَجَبَتَ لَهُ الجَنَّةَ.\

Give the people glad tidings that whoever declares that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh without partners will be assured

\textsuperscript{57} Recorded by al-Bukhārī (9) and Muslim (35).

\textsuperscript{58} Recorded by al-Bazzār in \textit{Majma‘ az-Zawā‘id} (1/162); authenticated by al-Albānī in \textit{Sahih al-Jāmi’} (6433).

\textsuperscript{59} Recorded by at-Tirmidhi (3590) and graded as \textit{hasan} by al-Albānī in \textit{Sahih al-Jāmi’} (5648).
Paradise.\textsuperscript{60}

Professing \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allāh} is the reason for entering Paradise and being saved from the Hellfire; both of them are consequences of this profession. However, this ultimate outcome cannot be achieved except by upholding its conditions and refraining from its impediments; otherwise, violating this will prejudice the outcome. For this very reason, when al-Ḥasan was told that some people were claiming that whoever professes \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allāh} will enter Paradise, he responded: “Whoever professes \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allāh} and commits its rights and obligations will enter Paradise.”

Wahb bin Munabbih answered the one who asked him, “Is \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allāh} the key to Paradise?” with, “Yes, but every key has teeth. If you bring a key with teeth, the door will be opened; otherwise, it will not, if it lacks its teeth.”

Shaykh-ul-Islām Imām Ibn Taymiyyah\textsuperscript{61} said, “Whoever professes \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allāh} out of absolute certainty and truthfulness is likely to die without insisting on sins, either because he is not originally the kind of person who insists on sins or because his \textit{ta\\u00a0uw\\u00a0h\\u00a0i\\u00a0d}, which is watered with certainty and truthfulness, will make the good deeds outweigh the ill ones.

“As for those who enter the Hellfire from among those who profess \textit{lā ilāha ill-Allāh}, they have missed one of those conditions: either certainty and truthfulness were not fulfilled, or sins outweighed the good deeds, or they professed it in their earlier stage but later their sins outweighed their good deeds, which consequently debilitated their certainty and truthfulness. The profession of those people is so weak that it will not aid them in wiping out their sins; rather, their sins will eventually outweigh their good deeds.”\textsuperscript{61}

And truly it is the best praise. Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh said that he heard

\textsuperscript{60} Recorded by an-Nasā‘i in \textit{Al-Kubrā} (6/274); authenticated by al-Albānī in \textit{Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘} (2824).

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Minhāj as-Sunnah} (6/226).
The Prophet ﷺ saying:

أَفْضَلُ الْذُّكْرُ لَأَلِهَةِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَفْضَلُ الدَّعَاءِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

The best of invocations is lā ilāha ill-Allāh and the best of supplications is “All praise is to Allāh.”

Lā ilāha ill-Allāh is the best of invocations because faith is non-existent without it. It also includes the affirmation of divinity for Allāh and stripping it from any other; none of the [other] forms of invocation contain this. Additionally, it merits being the best of invocations because it is the profession of tawḥīd, and nothing is comparable to that.

Repetition of lā ilāha ill-Allāh has an impact on purifying the human’s soul from any repulsive attributes. This purification is a result of denying divinity for other than Allāh and affirming it for Allāh solely, without partners. Since the obligation of knowing and understanding the profession of lā ilāha ill-Allāh came prior to the obligation of prayer and fasting, realizing its essence is, necessarily, greater than seeking to know the obligation of prayer and fasting.

Furthermore, since Allāh prohibited shīrīk and believing in tāgbūt, which is graver than the prohibition of marrying mothers and aunts, the testimony of lā ilāha ill-Allāh merited the highest rank in faith.

In short, the profession of tawḥīd has rightfully earned [its place as] the best of invocations and the best of good deeds, because it is not only the key to Islām, it is also the only entrance to the fold of Islām. It is the root of Islām and the criterion between Islām and disbelief, and if one dies while saying it willingly and it was the end of his speech, he will enter Paradise.

It is narrated on the authority of ʿAbdullāh bin ʿAmr that the Prophet ﷺ said:

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62 Recorded by at-Tirmidhī (3383), an-Nāṣāʾī in Al-Kubrā (6/208, #10667), Ibn Mājah (3800), and al-Ḥakīm (1/676); graded as hasan by al-Albānī in Ar-Targhib wa-t-Tarhib (1526).
None on earth would say, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, Allāh is the Greatest, and there is no might or power except by Allāh” but his sins will be expiated even if they were as much as the foam of the sea.\(^5\)

Allāh sent His Prophet ﷺ with this profession. Rabī’ah bin ‘Ibād said, “I saw the Prophet ﷺ with my eyes in the market saying:

بي أَيُحِبَّهَا النَّاسُ، فُوَلُوا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ تُفْلِحُوا.

“O people: Say lā ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh); you will succeed.”\(^6\)

Tāriq bin ‘Abdullāh al-Muḥārībi said, “I saw the Prophet ﷺ in the market of Dhul-Majāz, and he was saying, ‘O people: Say that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh; you will succeed.’”\(^6\)

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar that the Messenger of Allāh said:

اَمِرُتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنْ مُحْمَدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَ يُقْيِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَ يَؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ دَعَاهمُ وَ أَمَرَأُهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الإِسْلَامِ وَ جَسَامُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

\(^5\) Recorded by Ahmad (6920) and at-Tirmidhi (3460); graded as hasan by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ (5636).

\(^6\) Recorded by Imām Ahmad in his Musnad (16023, 19004). It is also narrated by a narrator from Bani Mālik bin Kinānah (16601, 23192).

\(^6\) Ibn Ḥibbān recorded it in Mawārid az-Zamān (1683) and al-Albānī graded it as sahih in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mawārid (1401). Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah in his Ṣaḥīḥ (159), Ibn Abī Shaybah in Musannaf (18414), al-Bayhaqi (1/76), and al-Bukhāri in the book Khalq Afāl al-Ībād (149); and check Ṣaḥīḥ as-Sirah an-Nabawyyah (pp. 142-143).
I have been commanded to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh, and they establish prayer and pay zakāt. And if they do it, their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allāh.\textsuperscript{66}

And all the messengers were sent with lā ilāha ill-Allāh. Allāh the Almighty says:

\begin{quote}
\begin{center}
ولقد بعثنا في كل أمية رسولًا أن أعبدوا الله واجتنبوا الطاغوت
\end{center}
\end{quote}

And verily, We have sent among every ummah (community, nation) a messenger (proclaiming), “Worship Allāh (alone), and avoid (or keep away from) tāghūt (all false deities, i.e., do not worship tāghūt besides Allāh).”

[Sūrah an-Naĥl 16:36]

Allāh the Almighty says:

\begin{quote}
\begin{center}
وما أرسلنا من قبلك من رسولنا إلا نوحياً إليه آنها لآ إله إلا أنا فاعبدون
\end{center}
\end{quote}

And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We inspired him (saying), “Lā ilāha illā Ana [none has the right to be worshiped but I (Allāh)], so worship Me (alone and none else).”

[Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ 21:25]

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar  that the Prophet ﷺ said:

\textsuperscript{66} Recorded by al-Bukhāri (25) and Muslim (22).
I was sent at the time of the Hour of Resurrection with the sword until Allāh is worshiped without partners; my provision was made under the shadow of my spear, and lowliness and servility were upon those who disobeyed me; and whoever imitates a people is from them.\(^{67}\)

It is narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar that the Prophet ﷺ said:

The best of what I and the prophets before me said was, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh alone, without partners; to Him belongs all sovereignty and praise, and He is Omnipotent over all things.”\(^{68}\)

Buraydah ﷺ narrated:

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ heard a man saying, “O Allāh! I ask you by the virtue of my testimony that you are Allāh; none has the right

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\(^{67}\) Recorded by Ahmad (5043) and it was graded as ṣahih by al-Albānī (2831).

\(^{68}\) Recorded by at-Tirmidhī (3585) and al-Albānī classified it as hasan in Ṣaḥīh al-Jāmi’ (3274).
to be worshiped except You, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who did not beget and was not begotten, and to whom none is equal.” Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ then said, “He has asked Allāh by His name by which when asked, He gives, and by which when supplicated, He answers.”

This *hadith* denotes that Allāh has a “greatest name,” and if He were to be supplicated to by it, He would grant (the supplication), and if He were to be asked by it, He would bestow (what was asked for). Additionally, this *hadith* covers the profession of *tawḥīd*, its implication, its requirement, and, on top of this, it denotes the priceless value of the profession of *tawḥīd*.

It is narrated by Anas that the Prophet ﷺ said:

ِّبُخَرُجُ مِنَ الْبَنَارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّلَّهُ وَ فِي قَلْبِهِ وَ زَنٌ شَعْبَرَةٍ مَنْ خَيْرُ وَ بُخَرُجُ مِنَ الْبَنَارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّلَّهُ وَ فِي قَلْبِهِ وَ زَنٌ بُرْزَةٍ مَنْ خَيْرُ وَ بُخَرُجُ مِنَ الْبَنَارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّلَّهُ وَ فِي قَلْبِهِ وَ زَنٌ دِرْزَةٍ مَنْ خَيْرُ.

Whoever says, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh,” and has in his heart good (faith) equal to the weight of a barley grain will be taken out of Hell, and whoever says, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh,” and has in his heart good (faith) equal to the weight of a wheat grain will be taken out of Hell, and whoever says, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh” and has in his heart good (faith) equal to the weight of an atom will be taken out of Hell.

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69 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd (1493), at-Tirmidhi (347), Ibn Mājah (3857), and Ibn Ḥībūn in *Mawārid as-Zam‘ān* (2383); authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ at-Targhib wat-Tarhib* (1640).

70 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (7410) and Muslim (193).
VIRTUE OF LÀ ILĀHA ILL-ALLĀH:

Là Ilāha Ill-Allāh is the Best Aid for Resorting to Allāh in Times of Distress

Umm Salamah (the wife of the Prophet) narrated that Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ woke up one night in a state of terror and said:

"SubhānAllāh, how many treasures Allāh has sent down! And how many afflictions have been sent down! Who will go and wake the lady dwellers (wives of the Prophet) of these rooms (for prayers)?" He meant his wives, so that they might pray. He added, “A well-dressed (soul) in this world may be naked in the Hereafter.”

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

Increase (in saying) the testimony of là ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh); a barrier is placed between you and it, and prompt your dead people to say it.

Abū Hurayrah reported Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ as saying:

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71 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (5844).

72 “Dead person” means “the one who is on his deathbed” because he is still accountable for actions; otherwise, prompting him after death has no benefit and it is an innovation.

73 Recorded by Abū Ya’lā in his Musnad (11/9, #6147) and by Ibn ‘Adi (4/103); classified as hasan by al-Albānī in Ar-Saḥīḥah (467).
He who takes an oath in which he says, “By al-Lāt (and al-‘Uzzah),” should say74: “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh”; and if anyone says to his friend, “Come and I will gamble75 with you,” he should pay sadaqah (charity)76.

Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

Whoever says that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, it will benefit him one day from his life regardless of whatever happened to him before.78

VIRTUE OF LĀ ILĀHA ILL-ALLĀH:
It is Recommended to Repeat Lā Ilāha Ill-Allāh at Times of Death and Disaster

‘Ā’ishah narrated during the Prophet’s death ﷺ:

74 This means: Let him utter the profession of tawḥid in order to save himself, as what is committed apparently interrelates with shirk.

75 This means that two individuals challenge each other regarding something on the condition that one of them shall win a given quantity of some money or something else; it is unanimously prohibited.

76 In order to expiate the sins just committed.

77 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (4860) and Muslim (1647).

78 Recorded by al-Bazzār in Majma‘ az-Zawā‘id (1/17), at-Tabarānī in Al-Awsat (3486), Abū Nu‘aym in al-Hihāyah (7/126), al-Bayhaqi in The Branches of Faith (1/109, #97); classified as saḥīh by al-Albānī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘ (6434).
There was a leather or wood container full of water in front of Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ (at the time of his death). He would put his hand into the water and rub his face with it, saying, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh! No doubt, death has its agonies.”  

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَقِنُوا مَوْتًا كَمْ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي كَانَ أَخْرُ كَلَامِهِ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ يُومًا مِنَ الدَّهْرِ وَلَنَ أَصَابَهُمَا عَلَى ذلِكَ مَا أَصَابَاهُما.

Prompt your dead to say that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, because whoever’s last words at death are “none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh” will enter Paradise one day, regardless of whatever happened to him before.

Muʿādh bin Jabal narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ كَانَ أَخْرُ كَلَامِهِ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ.

Whoever’s last words were “none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh,” he has entered Paradise.

Anas bin Mālik narrated that the Prophet ﷺ visited a man from al-Anṣār and said:

يَا خَالِيكُمْ قُلْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَقَالَ أَ خَالٌ أَمْ عَمُّمٌ قَالَ لَا بَلْ خَالٌ قَالُوا فَحَيْرُونَ لِي أَنَّ أَقُولَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ قَالَ تَعَمَّرْ

“O my (maternal) uncle, say that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh.” The man said, “Is it (paternal) uncle or (maternal)

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79 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (4449).
80 Recorded by Ibn Hibbān (7/272, #3004) and it was authenticated by al-Albānī in Aḥkām al-Janaʾiz (19) and in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Žāmī (5150).
81 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and al-Ḥākim; classified as sahih by al-Albānī.
uncle?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “(Maternal) uncle.” The man said, “Is it beneficial for me to say that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes.”

Sa‘îd bin al-Musayyib narrated:

латмًا خَصَرَتْ أُبا طَالِبٍ الْوَفَّاَةُ دَحْلًا عَلَيْيْهِ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمْ - وَ عَنْدَهُ أُبا جَهَلَ وَ عَنْدُ اللَّهِ بِنُ أُبي أمِيَّةٍ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمْ: ((أَيُّي عَمَّمَ قَلْ، لَا إِلَيْهِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. أَحَاجُّ لَكَ بِهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)). فَقَالَ أُبا جَهَلَ وَ عَنْدُ اللَّهِ بِنُ أُبي أمِيَّةٍ، يَا أُبا طَالِبٍ أَ تَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّتِ عَنْدَ الْمُطَلِّبِ . فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمْ: ((أَلَسْ تَعْفِيْنَ لَكَ مَا لَمْ تُنَالُ عَنْكَ؟)) فَنَزَلَتْ مَا كَانَ لِلَّبَنِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ أَمَنَّا أَنْ يُسِتَّعْفَىْ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولِي قُرْنِي مِنْ بَعْدٍ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنْ تُهْمِّ أَصْحَابُ الْحَجِّ؟

When Abū Ṭālib’s death approached, the Prophet ﷺ went to him while Abū Jahl and ‘Abdullâh bin Abî Umayyah were present with him. The Prophet ﷺ said, “O uncle, say, ‘None has the right to be worshiped except Allâh,’ so that I may argue for your case with it before Allâh.” On that, Abû Jahl and ‘Abdullâh bin Abî Umayyah said, “O Abû Ṭâlib! Do you want to renounce ‘Abdul-Mu’tâlib’s religion?” Then the Prophet said, “I will keep on asking (Allâh for) forgiveness for you unless I am forbidden to do so.” Then it was revealed: “It is not fitting for the Prophet and those who believe that they should invoke (Allâh) for forgiveness for pagans even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the Fire.” [Sûrah at-Tawbah 9:113]

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82 Recorded by Aḥmad in his Musnad (12134) and Abû Ya’lā in his Musnad (3512); classified as sahîh by al-Albâni in Ahkâm al-Janâ’îz (p. 20).

83 Recorded by al-Bukhâri (1360) and Muslim (24).
VIRTUE OF LÀ ILĀHA ILL-ĀLĀH:
Là Ilāha Ill-Ālāh is the Best of Good Deeds

Abū Dharr narrated, “I said, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, advise me!’ The Prophet ﷺ responded:

إِذَا عَمِلْتُ سَيِّئَةً فَأُتِبِيْعُهَا حَسَنَةً تَمْكِحُهَا، قَيْلَ: ((بَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، أَمِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ)) قَالَ: ((هَيْ أَفْضِلُ الْحَسَنَاتِ)).

‘If you have committed a sin, follow it by a good deed that will erase it.’ I said, ‘Is là ilāha ill-Ālāh from the good deeds?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘It’s the best of the good deeds.’”84

‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

يُضَامُحُ بِرَجُلٍ مِنْ أُمُّيِّي يُومَ الْقِيَامَةَ عَلَى رَوَاهُ الْخَلِّائِيّ فِيْنَثْرُ
لَهُ بِسْعَةٍ وَ بُضُعْعُون يَسْجَلَا كُلُّ سِجْلٌ مِّدَّ الْبَسْرَ ثُمَّ يَقْوُلُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ: ((هُمُّ نُتْكَرُ مِنْ هَذَا سَيِّئَةً)) فِيْقُولُونَ: ((لَا بَيْنِ رَبِّنَا)) فِيْقُولُ:
( )) أَظْلَمُ مَنْ كَتِبَ الْحَافِظُونَ ثُمَّ يَقْوُلُ أَلَّلَهُ كَتِبَ حَسَنٌ
فِيْهَا الرَّجُلُ)) فِيْقُولُونَ: ((لَا)). فِيْقُولُونَ: ((بَلَى إِنْ نَلَّكَ عِنْدَا حَسَنَاتٌ وَ إِنْ لَّهُ أَظْلَمُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ فَتَخْرُجُ لِهِ بِطَاقَةٍ فِيهَا أَشْهَدُ
أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ أَنْ مُحْمَدُ عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ)) قَالَ: ((فِيْقُولُ
باَيْنِ رَبِّ مَا هَذِهِ الْبِطَاقَةُ مَعْ هَذِهِ السَّجَلَاتِ)) فِيْقُولُونَ: (بَلَى لَا
تَظْلَمُ. فَتُوْضَعُ السَّجَلَاتُ فِي كِتَابَ الْبِطَاقَةِ فِي كَيْفَةٍ قَطَاشَاتِ
السَّجِلَاتِ وَ نَقُلَتِ الْبِطَاقَة.*

A man from my nation will be called before all of creation on the Day

84 Recorded by Ahmad in his Musnad (20976), and it is classified as sahih by al-Albâni in Sahîh at-Târîkh at-Tarîh (3162).
of Resurrection, and 99 scrolls will be spread out for him, each one extending as far as the eye can see. Then Allāh will say, “Do you deny anything of this?” He will say, “No, O Lord.” He will say: “Have My recording scribes been unfair to you?” Then He will say, “Apart from that, do you have any good deeds?” The man will be terrified and will say, “No.” (Allāh) will say, “Indeed, you have good deeds with Us, and you will not be treated unjustly this Day.”

Then a card will be brought out on which is written, “Ash-badu an lā ilāha ill-Allāh wa anna Muḥammadan ‘abdub hu wa Rasūluhu” (I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger). He will say, “O Lord, what is this card compared with these scrolls?” He will say, “You will not be treated unjustly.” Then the scrolls will be placed on one side of the balance and the card on the other. The scrolls will go up (i.e., be light) and the card will go down (i.e., will weigh heavily).\(^{85}\)

Imām Ibn al-Qayyim said, “People’s actions are not judged by their performance or their number; rather, they are weighted and gain superiority depending on the quality of the heart. If compared, various actions could have identical performances, yet the gap between them is like that between the earth and the heavens. Reflect on the hadith about the card that is put on one side of the scale facing 99 scrolls, and each one of them is extended as far as the eye can see; despite this, the card swings the scale in its favor and outweighs the scrolls, which will result in sparing this person from punishment. It is known that every monotheist is guaranteed this card; however, lots of them enter the Hellfire due to their sins.”\(^{86}\)

Abū Hurayrah reported that Allāh’s Messenger said:

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\text{قَالَ: سَمِعْتُمْ بِمَدْيِنَةِ جَامِعَتِ دَرَ برُجُبَ مِنْهَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَجَانِبَ مِنْهَا فِي الْبَحْرِ. قَالُوا: نَعْمَ أَ يَ سُوْلُ اللَّهِ. قَالَ: لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى يَغْرُوبُ هَا سَبْعُونَ آلِفَةَ مِنْ نَيْبِ}
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\(^{85}\) Recorded by at-Tirmidhi (2639), Ibn Mājah (4300), and al-Hākim (1/710, #1937); authenticated by al-Albānī in as-Silsilah as-Shāhīh (135).

\(^{86}\) Madārij as-Sālikin (1/331).
"You have heard about a city, one side of which is on land and the other is in the sea (Constantinople)." They said, "O Allāh's Messenger, yes." Thereupon, he said, "The Last Hour will not come until 70,000 people from Bani Ishāq attack it. When they land there, they will neither fight with weapons nor will they shower arrows; they will only say, 'None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and Allāh is the Greatest,' so one side of it would fall." [Thawr (one of the narrators) said, "I think that he said, 'The part by the side of the ocean.'"]

"Then they will say for the second time, 'None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and Allāh is the Greatest,' so the second side will also fall, and they will say, 'None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and Allāh is the Greatest,' so the gates will be opened for them, and they will enter therein. And they will be collecting spoils of war and distributing them amongst themselves when a noise will be heard and it will be said, 'Verily, Dajjāl has come.' Thus, they will leave everything there and turn to him."

Abū Dharr narrated:

\[
\text{أَبْنِيُّ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَعَلَيْهِ نُورُ أَبْنِيُّ وَهُوَ نَائِمُ، ثُمَّ أَنَّهُ}
\text{وَقَدْ أَسْتَيْقَظَ، فَقَالَ مَا مِنْ عِبَادِكَ الَّذِينَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّلَّهُ، ثُمَّ مَاتَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ ذِلِكَ}
\]

87 Recorded by Muslim (2920). Al-Qāḍī ʻIyād said, "Some scholars maintained that the known version of this hadith asserts that the invaders referred to in it are from the children of Ismā‘īl. The context of the hadith supports this statement, as it refers to the Arabs. The city meant in the hadith is Constantinople."
I came to the Prophet ﷺ while he was wearing white clothes and sleeping. Then I went back to him again after he had gotten up from his sleep. The Prophet said, “Nobody says, ‘None has the right to be worshiped except Allâh’ and then later dies while believing in that, except that he will enter Paradise.” I said, “Even if he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and theft?” He said, “Even if he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and theft.” I said, “Even if he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and theft?” He said, “Even if he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and theft.” I said, “Even if he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and theft?” He said, “Even if he had committed illegal sexual intercourse and theft, despite Abû Dharr’s dislike.”\(^\text{88}\)

Abû Dharr used to repeat the Prophet’s last sentence, “despite Abû Dharr’s dislike,” every time he reported this hadith.

Sād bin Abī Waqqās narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

\[\text{The supplication of Dhun-Nūn when he was inside the whale was,} \]
\[\text{“Lā ilāha illā Anta [none has the right to be worshiped but You (O Allâh)], Glorified (and Exalted) are You [above all that (evil) they associate with You]. Truly, I have been of the wrongdoers.” As soon as the Muslim supplicates to Allâh with this supplication, Allâh will accept from him.} \(^\text{89}\)]

\(^{88}\) Recorded by al-Bukhâri (5827) and Muslim (94).

\(^{89}\) Recorded by at-Tirmidhî (3505), Ahmad (1465), an-Nasâ’î in Al-Kubrâ (10492), al-Ḥâkim in Al-Mustadrâk (1/684), and Abû Ya’lâ in his Musnad (772); authenticated by
Abū Bakrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said,

دعاءات المكروب اللهم رحمتمكم أرجو فلا تكذبني إلى نفسي طرفة عينٍ
وأصلح لي شانكي كلهنا لَّا إِلَهَ إِلّا أَنتَ.

The supplications to be used by one who in distress are, “O Allāh! Your mercy is what I hope for. Do not abandon me to myself for an instant, but put all my affairs in good order for me. None has the right to be worshiped except You.”

Ibn ‘Abbās said, “The Prophet ﷺ used to say at a time of distress:

لا إِلَهَ إِلّا الله العظيم الحليم لا إِلَهَ إِلّا الله رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ.
الله رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

“Lā ilāha ill-Allāh (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh), the Forbearing. None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, Lord of the magnificent Throne. None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, Lord of the heavens, Lord of the earth, and Lord of the noble Throne.”

‘Alī ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

أَلَا أَعْلَمَكُم كَلِمَاتٍ إِذَا قَلَتُمْ غَفَرَ اللهُ لَّكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنتُم مُّغَفَّرُوا لَكُمْ قَالَ: (فَلَّا إِلَهَ إِلّا الله العظيم الحليم لا إِلَهَ إِلّا الله الحليم الكريم لا إِلَهَ إِلّا الله سُبْحَانَ الله رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ).

“Shall I teach you a few words by which, if you say them, Allāh will forgive you even if you were forgiven?” He said, “Say: ‘None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, the Most High, the Supreme

al-Albānī in As-Silsilah as-Sahihah (1744).

90 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd (5090), Ahmad (27898), al-Bukhārī in Al-Adab al-Mufrad (701), and Ibn Ḥibbān in his Sahih (970); classified as hasan by al-Albānī in Sahih al-Jāmi‘ (3388).

91 Recorded by al-Bukhārī (6346) and Muslim (2730).
(in glory); none has the right to be worshiped except Allah, the All Knower, the All Wise; none has the right to be worshiped except Allah, the Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the great Throne; and in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.”

‘Umar narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

ما منكم من أحد يوضَع فيّبلغ أو فيّسغ – الوضوء ثم يقول أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً عبد الله ورسول الله إلا فتحت له أبواب الجنة المقيرة يدخل من أيها شاء.

If anyone amongst you performs ablution, completes the ablution well, and then says, “I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah and that Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger,” the eight gates of Paradise will be opened for him and he may enter by whichever of them he wishes.

Sa’d bin Abi Waqqas reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

من قال حين يستمع المؤذن وأن أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأنشهد أن محمداً عبد الله ورسول الله صبّت بالله يزّ النبأ ويحمده رسولًا و بالإسلام دينًا غفر الله.

If anyone says when he hears the mu’adhdbin: “And I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah alone, who has no partner, and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger; I am satisfied with Allah as Lord, with Muhammad as Prophet, and with Islam as religion,” he will be forgiven.

Anas bin Malik reported:

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92 Recorded by at-Tirmidhi (3604); authenticated by al-Albâni in Sahîh al-Jâmi’ (2621).
93 This means to perform ablution in the best way described in the Sunnah.
94 Recorded by Muslim (234).
95 Recorded by Muslim (386).
The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to attack the enemy at dawn. He would listen to the adhān, so if he heard an adhān, he stopped; otherwise, he made an attack. Once, on hearing a man say, “Allāh is the Greatest, Allāh is the Greatest,” the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ remarked, “He is following al-fitrāh (Islām).” Then, upon hearing him say, “I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, I testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh,” the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “You have come out of the Fire (of Hell).” They looked at him and found that he was a goat herder.⁹⁶

Nu‘mān bin Bashīr narrated that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

What you mention of the glory of Allāh, of tashbīh (subhānAllāh), tahlīl (lā ilāha ill-Allāh), and tahmīd (al-hamdū lillāh) revolves around the Throne, buzzing like bees, reminding of the one who said it. Wouldn’t any one of you like to have, or continue to have, something that reminds of him (in the presence of Allāh)?⁹⁷

Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

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⁹⁶ Recorded by Muslim (382).
⁹⁷ Recorded by Ibn Mājah (3809); authenticated by al-Albānī in Sahih at-Targhib wa-Tarhīb (1568).
Should I tell you of the plant that is better than this? [It is that] you say, “How perfect is Allāh, all praise is to You, none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, and Allāh is the Greatest”; a tree is being planted for you along with every word you say.\(^{98}\)

Ibn Mas‘ūd narrated that the Messenger of Allāh said:

I met Ibrāhīm on the night of my ascent, so he said, “O Muḥammad, deliver salām from me to your nation, and inform them that Paradise has pure soil and delicious water, and that it is a flat, treeless plain, and that its seeds are: ‘Glory is to Allāh (subḥānAllāh) (and) all praise is due to Allāh (al-hamdu lillāh) and none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh (lā ilāha ill-Allāh), and Allāh is the greatest (Allāhu Akbar).’”\(^{99}\)

Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allāh said:

That I should say, “Glory is to Allāh (subḥānAllāh), all praise is due to Allāh (al-hamdu lillāh), none has the right to be worshiped except

\(^{98}\) Recorded by Ibn Mājah (3807) and al-Ḥākim (1/693); authenticated by al-Albānī in Sahīh al-Jāmi‘ (2613).

\(^{99}\) Recorded by at-Tirmidhi (3462), and by at-Ṭabarānī in Al-Kabīr (10/173); authenticated by al-Albānī in Sahīh al-Jāmi‘ (3214).
Allāh (la ilāha ill-Allāh), and Allāh is the greatest (Allāhu Akbar)” is more beloved to me than all that the sun has risen over.\footnote{Recorded by Muslim (2695).}

Jubayr bin Mu‘īm narrated that the Prophet ☪ said:

من قال: سبحان الله وحده،cription omitted، أشهد أن لا إله إلا أنت أنت أنت، فقللها في مجلس ذكر كان كالطابع يطبع عليه، ومن قالها في مجلس لغو كانت كفارة له.

Whoever says, “Glory is to You, O Allāh, and praise; I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except You. I seek Your forgiveness and I repent to You,” (Subhānaka Allāhuma wa biham-dikawa ash-badu an la ilāha illā Anta, astaghfiruka wa arūbu ilayk); and if it’s said in a session of dhikr, it will be like a stamp sealed on the one who says it, and if it’s said in a regular conversation, it will expiate whatever indiscretion could be committed.\footnote{Recorded by an-Nasā’ī in Al-Kubra (6/112, #10257) and by al-Ḥākim (1/720); authenticated by al-Albānī in Sahih al-Jāmī (6430).}

“Subhānaka Allāhuma” means: Deeming Allāh far above whatever inapt description may be attributed to His lofty position.

‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar reported that whenever Allāh’s Messenger ☪ came back from battle, expeditions, Ḥajj, or ‘Umrah, he would utter, as he reached the top of the hillock or upon the elevated hard ground, “Allāhu Akbar” thrice, and then he would say:

لا إلaha illa Allaha waladu Allaha As-ṣirīk Allaha, Allaha al-mulk, wa Allaha sabda, wa Allaha ṣaddiq, wa Allaha muqaddas, wa Allaha halim, wa Allaha qādir, wa Allaha al-A‘ẓim wa Allaha al-Majid wa Allaha al-Wajjud wa Allaha al-Ghaffar wa Allaha al-Ra‘ūsidha.

None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh. He is One, there is no partner with Him; His is the sovereignty and His is the praise and He is Omnipotent over everything. (We are) returning, repenting,
worshiping, and prostrating before our Lord, and we praise Him. Allāh fulfilled His promise and helped His servant, and routed the confederates alone.\textsuperscript{102}

Abū Hurayrah narrated that Allāh’s Messenger \( \text{سید} \) said:

من قال لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له علٰه الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شرٌ قدير في يوم مئات مرات كأنّه عدل عشر رقاء وكبّنت له مائة حسنات ومحيّت عنه مائة ستيتة وكانت له جزءا من الشيطان يومنه ذلِك حتى يبسم ويَتَّبَ أهده بافضل مما جاء به إلا أهده عميل أكثر من ذلِك.

Whoever utters these words, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, the One, having no partner with Him. Sovereignty belongs to Him and all praise is due to Him, and He is Omnipotent over everything,” 100 times every day, there is a reward of emancipating 10 slaves for him, and 100 virtues are recorded to his credit, and 100 vices are blotted out from his scroll, and it is a safeguard for him against the Shaytān on that day until the evenings; and no one brings anything more excellent than this except one who has done more than this (who utters these words more than 100 times and does more good acts).\textsuperscript{103}

Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣāri said that the Prophet \( \text{سید} \) said:

من قال لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له عشرون مرات، كان كمن أعتق أربعة أئسة من ولد إسماعيل.

Whoever utters, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, the One, having no partner with Him; His is the sovereignty and all praise is due to Him and He is Omnipotent over everything,” 10 times is like the one who emancipated four slaves from the progeny

\textsuperscript{102} Recorded by al-Bukhāri (1797) and Muslim (1344).
\textsuperscript{103} Recorded by al-Bukhāri (3293) and Muslim (2691).
of Ismā‘īl. 104

Abū ‘Ayyāsh narrated that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

منْ قَالَ إِذَا أُصْحِبْ لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحَدَّهُ لَ شَرِيكُ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ كَانَ لَهُ عَدْلٌ رَقِيَّةٌ مِنْ وَلِدٍ إِسْمَاعِيلٍ وَكَبَّرَ لَهُ عَشْرُ خَسَاتٍ وَحُصُتْ عَنْهُ عَشْرُ سَيْبَاتٍ وَرُفَعَ لَهُ عَشْرُ دِرِجَاتٍ وَكَانَ فِي جَزَارِمِ الشَّيْطَانِ حَتَّى يُمَسِّي وَإِنْ قَالَهَا إِذَا أُمَسِّى كَانَ لَهُ مَثْلُ ذَلِكَ حَتَّى يُصَبِّحَ.

The one who says in the morning, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh alone, without partners; to Him belongs the dominion, to Him praise is due, and He is Omnipotent,” will have a reward equivalent to that of setting free a slave from the descendants of Ismā‘īl. He will have 10 good deeds recorded for him, 10 evil deeds deducted from him, he will be advanced 10 degrees, and he will be guarded from the Shaytān until the evening. If he says this in the evening, he will have a similar recompense until the morning. 105

Shaddād bin Aws narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

(سَيِّدُ الْإِسْتِغْفارِ أَنْ تَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ أَنَّكَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ حَقَّتَيْنِ وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوُعْدُكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أُعْوُدُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرٍّ مَّا صَنِعْتُ، أَبْوَاهُ لَكَ يَعْمَتُكَ عَلَيْهِ وَايْتُوْهُ لَكَ يَدَنْبَيْنِ، فَعَفَّرْ لِي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُغْفِرُ الذَّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ) قَالَ: (وَمَنْ قَالَهَا مِنْ النَّهَارِ مُوقِنًا بِهَا، فَمَاتَ مِنْ يَوْمِهَا فَكَبْلَ أَنْ يُمَسِّي، فَهُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْ قَالَهَا مِنْ الْيَلِينَ وَهُوَ مُوقِنُ بِهَا، فَمَاتَ فَكَبْلَ أَنْ يُصَبِّحَ، فَهُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ).

The most superior way of asking for forgiveness from Allāh is: “O

104 Recorded by Muslim (2693).
105 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd (5077), Ibn Mājah (3867), and Aḥmad (16147); authenticated by al-Albānī in Sahih al-Jāmi’ (6418).
Allāh, you are my Lord, none has the right to be worshiped except you, You created me and I’m your servant, and I abide to your covenant and promise upon me as best as I can; I take refuge in you from the evil of what I have committed. I acknowledge your favor and I acknowledge my sin, so forgive me, for verily, none can forgive sin except you.” The Prophet added, “If somebody recites it during the day with firm faith in it and dies on the same day before the evening, he will be from the people of Paradise; and if somebody recites it at night with firm faith in it and dies before the morning, he will be from the people of Paradise.”

Imām Ibn al-Qayyim remarked: “If Allāh wants good for His servant, He facilitates for him the means of repentance, remorse, submissiveness, and need, and provides him with assistance and resort, ease, means of imploring and supplication, and He opens his eyes for collecting as many good deeds as possible. The very sin he committed would be the threshold for bringing mercy (to him) until the point where the enemy of Allāh (i.e., the Shayṭān) says, ‘I wish I had left him and didn’t risk trapping him.’

This explains the statement of some of the Salaf: “Indeed, the servant could commit a sin that will eventually lead to Paradise, while a good deed might land him in the Hellfire.” The audience wondered, “How could this be?”

He dispelled their wonder and replied:

“On the one hand, one could commit a sin but not be able to brush off the memory; the sin is ever-present before his eyes, which evokes various emotions of fear, dread, apprehension, remorse, and even weeping, and extreme embarrassment before Allāh. The person, at this moment, hangs his head with a broken heart for Allāh. Ultimately, this very sin will be his ticket to happiness and success; it will be more beneficial than many acts of worship due to its pleasant consequences that conclude one’s journey to Paradise.

106 Recorded by al-Bukhāri (6306).
107 Al-Wābil as-Sayyib (6).
“On the other hand, one could perform a good deed but insist on bragging and showing off about it, and he keeps voicing it loudly—‘I did such-and-such’—repeatedly. Deep conceit and arrogance will gradually infiltrate this person’s character if this attitude is maintained, which will lead eventually to self-destruction. However, if Allāh wills goodness for this person, He will afflict him with an ordeal that brings him to his knees, bends his neck, and extracts a feeling of shame from him. But if Allāh wills otherwise, He will abandon him until this conceit and arrogance eat him up; this abandonment marks the beginning of his destruction.

“All the notably wise people unanimously agree that the core of success lies in Allāh’s support, while destruction follows Allāh’s abandonment of the individual. Whomever Allāh wills good for, then the means of humility, resort, and needing Allāh will be eased for him. Additionally, he will gain an evolving sense of spotting his errors, oppression, and ignorance, as well as a growing recognition of Allāh’s bounties, generosity, mercy, and benevolence.”

Shaykh-ul-İslām Ismā’īl al-Harawi said, “The wise person journeys to Allāh with the sustenance of being mindful and appreciative of Allāh’s bounties and confessing his errors.” This exact understanding is intended in the following hadīth:

((سِيِّدُ الْإِسْتِفْقَارِ أَنْ تَقْوِلُ اللَّهُمَّ أَنتُ رَيْبٌ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنتُ، حَلَقَتْيَ بِأَنَا عَبَّدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطِعْتُ، أَعْوَدُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرٍّ مَا صَنْعَتْ، أَعْمِلُ لَكَ بِعَمَّالٍ عَلَى وَأَبُومٍ لَكَ بِذَنْيٍ، فَغَفَّرْ لِي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الْذُّنُوبِ إِلَّا أَنتَ)) قَالَ: ((وَمَنْ قَالَهَا مِنَ الْتَهَارِ مُؤْمِنًا يَبْحَثُ، فَمَاتَ مِنْ يَوْمِهِ فِيْلَانِيْنَ، فَقُبْلَ أَنْ يُسَبِّبَ، فَقَدْرُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْ قَالَهَا مِنَ الْلَّيْلِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنًا يَبْحَثُ، فَمَاتَ فَقُبْلَ أَنْ يُصْحِبَ، فَقَدْرُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ)).

The most superior way of asking for forgiveness from Allāh is: “O
Allāh, you are my Lord, none has the right to be worshiped except you, You created me and I’m your servant, and I abide to your covenant and promise upon me as best as I can; I take refuge in you from the evil of what I have committed. I acknowledge your favor and I acknowledge my sin, so forgive me, for verily, none can forgive sin except you.”

The statement, “I acknowledge your favor and I acknowledge my sin,” connects one’s consciousness of Allāh’s bounties to observing one’s defects in both soul and action. The former factor begets love and thankfulness to the provider of bounties, while the latter one produces humility, need, and repentance around the clock, as well as a perception of oneself being bankrupt of all good deeds.

The best means of drawing closer to Allāh is to embrace a constant sense of bankruptcy. The individual in this state experiences a denial of his own position and status and feels unworthy of Allāh’s bounties, i.e., sheer neediness and bankruptcy, similar to a person who is utterly devastated due to poverty, the kind of devastation that penetrates straight through one’s heart until it fractures it and engorges every single inch of the body. At this point, this person genuinely realizes his absolute and indispensable need for Allāh, that every single inch of his body is crying for Allāh’s support, and that if Allāh were to abandon him for just a blink of an eye, he would suffer irremediable loss, unless Allāh bestows His mercy.

Servitude to Allāh is built on two fundamental principles: true love and sheer humility. These two principles spring out of the former two bases: being mindful and appreciative of Allāh’s bounties, which produces love, and admitting one’s errors, which produces humility. Operating under the umbrella of these two principles, one’s enemy (i.e., the Shayṭān) will not overcome him unless [he is caught] in a state of surprise and inattentiveness. However, Allāh would aid him with His mercy to recover and heal quickly.\(^\text{110}\)

Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

\(^{110}\text{Al-Wābil as-Ṣayyib (pp. 11-12).}\)
Whoever says at the time of going to bed, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allâh alone, without partners, to Him belongs the sovereignty and praise, and He is over all things wholly capable, and there is no power nor might except with Allâh, the Most High, the Supreme. How perfect Allâh is and all praise is to Allâh; none has the right to be worshiped except him and Allâh is the Greatest,” his sins or offenses will be forgiven, even if they were as much as the foam of the sea.¹¹¹

‘Abdullâh bin ‘Umar ﺍ. proved that the Prophet ﷺ said:

Whoever enters the market and says, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allâh alone, without partners, to Him belongs the sovereignty and praise. He gives life and causes death, and He lives and does not die. In His Hand is all good, and He is over all things Omnipotent,” then Allâh will write one million good deeds for him, and will wipe away one million of his bad deeds, and will raise him one million levels and will build a home for him in Paradise.¹¹²

Abû Hurayrah narrated that Abû Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddîq said, “O Messenger

¹¹¹ Recorded by an-Nasâ’î (6/202, #10647) and Ibn Hibbân (5528); authenticated by al-Albâni in Şâhih at-Târîgh wa-Tarhib (607).

¹¹² Recorded by at-Tîrmîzî (3428), Ibn Mâjah (2235), Ahmad (329), and al-Ḥâkim (1/721); classified as hasan by al-Albâni in Şâhih al-Jâmi’ (6231).
of Allâh! Instruct me with something to say in the morning and in the evening.” The Prophet said:

من دخل السوق فقال لا إله إلا لله وحده لا شريك له وملكته وسلما
قلم الله قاطر السماوات والأرض عالياً عظيماً والشهداء رتب كل شيء
ومليكها أشهد أن لا إله إلا يأوى بك من شر نفسك وشر الشيطان
وشركك. قال: قلها إذا أصبت وإذا أمسيت وإذا أخذت مضجعك.

Say: “O Allâh, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who knows the unseen and the seen, Lord and Possessor of everything. I testify that none has the right to be worshiped but You; I seek refuge in You from the evil in myself, from the evil of the Shaytân, and from his (incitement to) attributing partners (to Allâh).” Say this in the morning.\(^{113}\)

It is reported on the authority of Ibn `Abbâs that Mu’âdh said: “The Messenger of Allâh sent me (as a governor of Yemen) and (at the time of departure) instructed me thus:

أدعهم إلى شهادة أن لا إله إلا لله وأني رسول الله فإن هم أطاعوا لذلك
فأعلهم أن الله افترض عليهم حمس صلوات في كل يوم وليلة فإن هم
أطاعوا لذلك فأعلهم أن الله افترض عليهم صدقة تؤخذ من أغنىهم
فترد في فقراءهم.

You will soon find yourself in a community, one among the People of the Book, so first call them to testify that none has the right to be worshiped except Allâh, and that I (Muhammad) am the Messenger of Allâh, and if they accept this, then tell them that Allâh has enjoined upon them five prayers during the day and the night; and if they accept that, then tell them that Allâh has made zakâh obligatory for them, that it should be collected from the rich and distributed among the poor.\(^{114}\)

\(^{113}\) Recorded by Abû Dâwûd (5067), at-Tirmidhi (3392), Ahmad (7901), Ibn Hibbân (962), and al-Hâkim (1/694); authenticated by al-Albânî in As-Sîsilah at-Sâhih (2753).

\(^{114}\) Recorded by al-Bukhârî (1359) and Muslim (19).
Shaykh al-Fawzān commented:

“This hadith manifests that the methodology of the messengers is that the profession of faith is the very first article they proclaim, because it is the cornerstone on which the religion is built; once it is fulfilled, one can build the rest of the religion on it. However, if it is not fulfilled, learning the rest of the religion shall yield no fruits; one cannot instruct people to pray while they associate others besides Allāh, and this applies to fasting, zakāh, retaining ties of kinship, and so on, as long as those addressed associate others besides Allāh, because of the lack of the foundation (of the religion).

“This is contrary to many callers of the present day who do not pay due attention to proclaiming the profession of faith; rather, they call people to keep away from usury, to commit to honest dealings, and to rule with what Allāh has sent down. As for tawhīd, it is out of their list and they are heedless of calling people to it, as if it were not obligated.

“Those callers’ efforts, no matter the struggle they go through, are in vain unless they are establishing the base upon which the religion is built, like prayer, zakāh, Ḥajj, and ruling with Allāh’s revealed law; this, indeed, is the messengers’ methodology. Each messenger started his da’wah with the testimony of lā ilāha ill-Allāh. Each one called people to tawhīd and rectification of the ‘aqidah (creed), and after this came the rest of the religion.

“Let us assume that a given community has abstained from usury, commits to prayer, the masājid are full, and every religious deed is observed; however, sincerity to Allāh is missing, which appears through calling upon others besides Allāh, like prophets, righteous people, and graves, etc. All of their deeds are rendered fruitless because they are not Muslims, no matter how much they pray and fast.”

—\(^{115}\)

\(^{115}\) Quoted from the explanation of Shaykh al-Fawzān on Kitāb at-Tawḥīd named Ṭanāh al-Muṭafṣid (p. 99).
Thawbān narrated that the Prophet said:

بَخَ بَخَ لَحْمِسَ مَا أَتَقَلَّهَنَّ فِي الْجِبَرِيْلَ: (لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ) وَالْوَلَّدُ الصَّالِحُ بَيْتُبَقِّي لِلْمُرْمِئِ الْمُسْلِمِ فِي بَيْتِهِ.

How great are the five deeds that are heavy on the scale (on the Day of Judgment): [Saying] lā ilāha ill-Allāh, subhānAllāh, al-ḥamdu lillāh, Allāhu Akbar (none has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, how perfect is Allāh, all praise is due to Allāh, and Allāh is the Greatest), and the righteous servant who submits to Allāh and waits for His reward when his child dies.¹¹⁶

Abū Hurayrah reported Allāh’s Messenger as saying:

مِنْ سَبِيحِ اللَّهِ فِي دُبِّر كُلُّ صَلاةٍ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَثَلَاثَينَ وَحَمِيدُ اللَّهِ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَثَلَاثَينَ وَكَبِيرُ اللَّهِ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَثَلَاثَينَ فِيْلَكَ بَسُعَةٌ وَتَسْعَنُ وَقَالَ تَمَامُ الْجَانَّةِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحَدِهُ لَا شَرِيعَةُ لِلَّهِ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ غَفِيرٌ خَتَانَهُ وَإِنَّ كَانَ مِثْلًا زَبَدَ البَيْحَرِ.

If anyone extols Allāh after every prayer 33 times, and praises Allāh 33 times, and declares His Greatness 33 times, 99 times in all, and says to complete 100, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allāh, having no partner with Him, to Him belongs sovereignty and to Him all praise is due, and He is Omnipotent over everything,” his sins will be forgiven, even if they are as abundant as the foam of the sea.¹¹⁷

‘Ubādah bin aṣ-Ṣāmit narrated that the Prophet said:

مِنْ تَعَارُ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَقَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحَدِهُ لَا شَرِيعَةُ لِلَّهِ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهَ

¹¹⁶ Recorded by al-Bazzār in Majma’ az-Zawā’id (10/101), an-Nasā’i in Al-Kubrā (6/50, #9995), Ibn Ḥibbān (833), al-Ḥākim (1/692), and Aḥmad (15235); authenticated by al-Albānī in Sahih al-Jāmi’ (2817).

¹¹⁷ Recorded by Muslim (579).
لا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي لَمْ يُخْلُقَ لَهُ شَيْئًا قَدِيرًا. الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهَ وَلَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي لَمْ يُخْلُقَ لَهُ شَيْئًا قَدِيرًا. اللَّهُ وَلَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرَ وَلَا حَوْلٌ وَلَا قُوَّةٌ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ. ثُمَّ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهُدْنِي إِلَى صَالِحٍ ۛ دَعُوا اسْتَجِبُوا فَإِنَّ تَوْضَأَنِ ۖ وَصُلُّ بَيْنَ يَدَيْنِكَ صَلَاتَكَ.

Whoever gets up at night and says, “None has the right to be worshiped except Allah, having no partner with Him, to Him belongs sovereignty and to Him is praise due, and He is Omnipotent over everything. How perfect Allah is and all praise is to Allah, none has the right to be worshiped except Him, Allah is the Greatest and there is no power nor might except with Allah,” and then says, “O Allah, forgive me,” or invokes Allah, he will be responded to; and if he performs ablution (and prays), his prayer will be accepted.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Recorded by al-Bukhāri (1154).
CONCLUSION

To wrap up, la ilâha ill-Allâh is composed of negation and affirmation. The negation exists in the phrase “there is no,” while the affirmation is in “but” to establish worship for Allâh alone, without partners. There are many ahâdîth that highlight the virtues of la ilâha ill-Allâh and its great significance.

Thus, we have to utter it continually and forever; perhaps Allâh will aid us in abiding by it and avoiding its nullifiers, and facilitate for our hearts, tongues, and organs the application of its conditions and requirements. We ask Allâh to guide us to implement it, to love its adopters and befriend them, and to make us an enemy for whoever opposes and hates it, until we meet Him.

We ask Allâh by His noble names and attributes to make the last of our speech in the worldly life la ilâha ill-Allâh, to make us from those who die upon it, to gather us with the company of its people, and to gather us with our Prophet ﷺ in the highest rank of Paradise.

You should increase your remembrance using it, as it is the best of remembrance and it is the best the messengers and prophets ever said. Beware of distorting it either through pronunciation or neglect. Stay away from falling into its nullifiers, and befriend and hate on its basis, as it is the foundation of this religion. For its cause, Allâh
created mankind, the earth, and the heavens, and jihād in the cause of Allāh was legislated between the soldiers of Allāh and the soldiers of the Shayṭān. Additionally, for its cause, Allāh will establish the Day of Judgment and resurrect the creation.

For its cause, the scales shall be established and the scrolls of deeds will be scattered, after which some will grab their scrolls with their right hand from the front, and others will grab it from the back by their left hand.

So increase in invoking Allāh with lā ilāha ill-Allāh, and adhere to it. Perhaps Allāh will take our lives upon saying it, for He is, verily, Omnipotent over everything. We ask Allāh by His noble names and attributes to make us adherents to tawḥīd and to bestow His bounties upon us by remaining upon it until He, the Exalted, takes our lives upon the Straight Path.

And may Allāh be pleased with our Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ and with his two parents, Ibrāhīm and Ismāʿīl, the rest of the prophets and messengers, and his family and Companions all together, and may He bless them in abundance.

And our last supplication is all praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.
Verily, the foremost matter individuals should put into effect is learning the purpose for which Allah created them, took the covenant upon them, sent His messengers to them, and sent down His divine scriptures.

For this purpose, the worldly life, the Hereafter, Paradise, and the Hellfire were created. Additionally, owing to this purpose, Judgment Day will be established, the scales of deeds will be set, the sheets of deeds will be scattered, and sorrow and happiness will be on that Day on which light will be distributed.

Allah says:

And he for whom Allah has not appointed light, for him there is no light.

Allah instructs us that we are created to worship Him. The backbone and foundation of worship is tawhid, which all the messengers were missioned to proclaim. The simple profession that comprises tawhid in its entirety is very short, has copious implications, and is critically significant; it is:

La ilaha ill-Allah.

It is the testimony of faith and the key to the abode of happiness. It is the foundation of this religion, the trunk of its tree, the pillar of its pavilion, while the rest of the pillars and obligations branch out of it, integrate it, and are restricted by observing and implementing its requirements. The whole purpose behind creation is crystallized in Allah’s saying:

And I (Allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me.

Allah has obligated every accountable individual to profess that nothing is worthy of worship except Allah and to act accordingly.