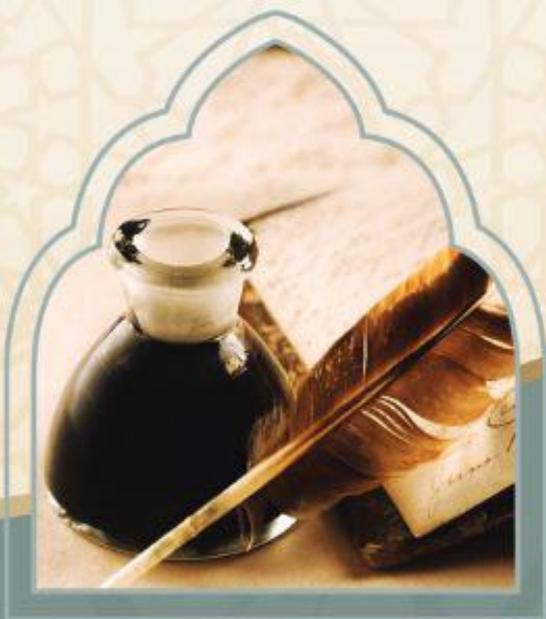


Essential Lessons for the General Ummah in 'Aqīdah



By
Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad
aṣ-Ṣādiq an-Najjār

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Translated by **Abū Sulaymān Muḥammad ‘Abdul-Azīm bin
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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About the Author

Shaykh Aḥmad an-Najjār

Name

Abū Asmā Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn aṣ-Ṣādiq an-Najjār

Birth

In Tripoli, the capital of Libya – 1400 AH.¹

Academic Qualifications

The shaykh obtained his Bachelor's Degree from the Islāmic University of Madīnah, Faculty of Ḥadīth and Islāmic Studies, in the year 1425–1426 AH², with a grade of excellence and first-class honors. He then obtained his Master's Degree from the Islāmic University of Madīnah, Faculty of Da'wah and Fundamentals of Religion, on 6/3/1431 AH³, with a grade of excellence and first-class honors, and a recommendation for the thesis to be published. He also obtained his Ph.D. from the Islāmic University of Madīnah, Faculty of Da'wah and Fundamentals of Religion. The dissertation was defended on 2/12/1436 AH, with a grade of excellence and first-class honors, and a recommendation for the dissertation to be published.

¹ Corresponding with September 1, 1980, CE.

² Corresponding to 2004–2005 CE.

³ Corresponding to 20/2/2010 CE.

Published Works

Despite his young age, Shaykh Aḥmad an-Najjār has authored numerous books and treatises. These works include books related to general beliefs, such as this book, books related to detailed beliefs, books defending the way (Manhaj) of the Salaf, and books related to Uṣūl al-Fiqh, etc.

1. General Beliefs:

- **Essential Lessons for the General Ummah in 'Aqīdah**
- **Principles Associated with the Area of 'Aqīdah**

2. Faith in Allāh:

- **Clarification of Rules (Aḥkām) Concerning Visiting Graves and Shrines**
- **The Ruling on Praying in Cemeteries Without the Intent of Veneration**
- **Important Questions & Answers Concerning Minor Shirk**
- **Ibn Taymiyyah's Agreement with the Salaf in Establishing the Principles Related to the Names and Attributes of Allāh**
- **An Explanation of the Meaning of the Ḥadīth: "Allāh created Adam in His image"**
- **The Impact of Belief in Allāh's Attributes on a Slave's Conduct**

3. The Remaining Pillars of Faith:

- **The Reality of Angels**

- Faith in the Scriptures Between the Affirmation of the Salaf and the Negation of those Who Came Later
- Belief in the Messengers
- Atharī Principles Associated with Belief in Divine Decree

4. Defense of the Way of The Salaf and Explanation of Their Writings:

- Clarification for Rational Minds on the True Belief of the Ash'arīs Regarding the Speech of Allāh and the Messenger (may Allāh raise his rank and grant him peace)
- Clearing the Salafī Imāms from the Accusation of Tafwīd (leaving the meaning of Allah's Attributes unspecified)
- Sunnī Responses to the Fabrications of the Ash'arī Sa'īd Fowdah in His Critique of "At-Tadmuriyyah"
- Explanation of the Introduction to Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī's Creed
- Sunnī Annotations on the Creedal Introduction of Ibn 'Āshir

5. Uṣūl al-Fiqh (Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence):

- Lessons in Uṣūl al-Fiqh for Beginners
- A Treatise on Uṣūl al-Fiqh Based on the Creed of the Imāms of the Salaf
- Foundational Principles in Uṣūl al-Fiqh with Practical Outcomes
- Explanation of "Al-Waraqāt" in Uṣūl al-Fiqh (with clarification of issues of kalām)

- **Explanation of “Minhāj al-Wusūl” to Uṣūl al-Fiqh by al-Baydāwī (with clarification of issues of kalām)**

6. Arabic Language:

- **Figurative Language in Arabic**

Academic Activities

- The shaykh taught at the Islāmic University of Madīnah for nine academic semesters, from 1430/1431 AH to 1434/1435 AH.
- In addition to receiving a Teaching Experience Certificate from the Faculty of Da‘wah and Fundamentals of Religion from the Islāmic University of Madīnah, he participated in various programs of the Saudi Association for Creed, Religions, Sects, and Schools of Thought.
- The shaykh participated in a WhatsApp-based program explaining the principles of the chapter on belief, and he also took part in the Issues in Creed program broadcast on the Holy Qur’ān Radio in Riyāḍ.

Administrative Work

The shaykh worked as a secretary for the Saudi Association for Creed, Religions, Sects, and Schools of Thought in the year 1427 AH.

Praise of the Scholars for Him

The Muftī of Madīnah, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ as-Suḥaymī said concerning the Shaykh:

“Indeed, our brother, Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad an-Najjār who is currently doing his dissertation for his Ph.D. at the Islāmic University of Madīnah in the Department of ‘Aqīdah, is one of the best students of knowledge I’ve known who are verifiers (muḥaqqiqīn) and possessing sound and correct Manhaj...Allāh is my witness that I love him for the sake of Allāh...”

Source: <https://youtu.be/oo09d8yHcL8?s:=4bWgg3d5jve.3CP>

Introduction

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation, and may Allāh send prayers upon our Prophet Muḥammad and his Family and all his Companions.

To proceed:

I have written these lessons in creed for the general Ummah to facilitate their understanding of what is obligatory upon them. These are simplified lessons—by the permission of Allāh the Most High—without delving into deep matters or mentioning those who oppose the People of the Sunnah and the Jamā‘ah or their doubts. Instead, I have restricted the content to essential issues of creed derived from the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as well as what the righteous predecessors of the Ummah have agreed upon.

Paying attention to ‘Aqīdah is obligatory for every Muslim, as it saves a person from doubts and desires in this world, and punishment in the Hereafter.

Through it, the purpose for which Jinn and mankind were created is realized.

Paying attention to ‘Aqīdah is a sign of the people of True Islāmic Faith, contrary to the people of disbelief, about whom Allāh says:

﴿وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ
الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ﴾

“And when Allāh Alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter are filled with disgust, but when those

(whom they worship) besides Him are mentioned, behold, they rejoice!” [Sūrah az-Zumar: 45]

Allāh described their state as such: when Allāh Alone is mentioned, their hearts recoil and detest it, but when their idols are mentioned, they rejoice.

This is a blameworthy trait that indicates an aversion to the very purpose for which they were created.

Therefore, Muslims must emphasize ‘Aqīdah through understanding, action, learning, and teaching.

These lessons aim to fulfill that objective. I ask Allāh to benefit the Muslims through them.⁴

⁴ The origin of these lessons is visual recordings, and one of the brothers transcribed them so their benefit may be widespread. I ask Allāh to reward him with the best rewards and bless these lessons. It is no secret that what is spoken is unlike what is written and refined.

Lesson 1: Summary of the Chapters of ‘Aqīdah

‘Aqīdah is what a person affirms and holds firmly in his heart.

This ‘Aqīdah has two main parts:

- The first: The Six Pillars of True Islāmic Faith
- The second: Matters connected to the Six Pillars of True Islāmic Faith

The First Part: The Six Pillars of Faith

These are found in the ḥadīth of Jibrīl, when he asked the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about faith, and he replied:

«الإيمانُ: أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ، وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَكُتُبِهِ، وَرُسُلِهِ، وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَأَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ
خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ»

“Faith is that you believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and that you believe in the divine preordainment (al-Qadar), its good and its evil.” [Reported by Muslim]

The pillars of faith are six:

1. Belief in Allāh
2. Belief in the Angels
3. Belief in the Books
4. Belief in the Messengers
5. Belief in the Last Day
6. Belief in Divine Decree, the good of it, and the bad of it

Included in the belief in Allāh are three elements:

1. Belief in His Lordship (Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah)
2. Belief in His Names and Attributes
3. Belief in His sole right to be worshipped (Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah)

The Second Part: What is Attached to the Pillars of Faith

Under this falls:

1. The concept of True Islāmic Faith (al-īmān)
2. The Companions
3. The Imāmate (leadership)

This is a general framework for the subject of creed and the issues that fall under it.

These creedal matters influence the slave's behavior. If a slave believes correctly and firmly, it inspires love for Allāh the Most High, hope in Him, and fear of Him. As a result, his life becomes upright, and he achieves happiness in this world and the next.

For example, if the slave knows which Names and Attributes belong to Allāh—the Most High—and that He is Merciful, and that He draws near to His slave if the slave draws near to Him, and that He descends to the lowest heaven and says:

«مَنْ يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ، مَنْ يَسْتَعْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ، مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيَهُ»

“Who will supplicate to Me so that I may respond to him? Who will ask Me so that I may give him? Who will seek My forgiveness so that I may forgive him?” [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

Undoubtedly, this fosters love for Allāh—the Most High. When the slave loves his Lord, he obeys His commands and will never be found in a

place Allāh despises. Similarly, he will not utter a word angering Allāh, as he knows Allāh hears him.

Lesson 2: The Source of Receiving [Knowledge] According to Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah

What is meant by the “source of receiving” is: From where is ‘Aqīdah taken?

The source of receiving ‘Aqīdah for Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah pertains to three matters:

First: The Book — and by the Book, we mean: the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān is the actual speech of Allāh – the Most High.

Second: The Sunnah — and by this, we mean the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, whether expressed in speech, actions, tacit approvals, or inaction.

The Sunnah is used as proof in ‘Aqīdah, whether it is mass-transmitted (mutawātir) or solitary (āḥād). Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah do not differentiate between the mutawātir and the āḥād when using them as proof in matters of creed. Just as they use the mutawātir as evidence, they also consider the āḥād.

Third: Consensus (al-ijmā‘) — which refers to the unanimous agreement of qualified scholars of the Ummah on a religious matter after the death of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

Here, a question arises: Why do we not use reason (‘aql) as proof in matters of creed?

The answer to this question is that the field of creed pertains to the unseen, which we cannot witness. When a matter is unseen, the intellect can not serve as a proof for it. Instead, it is only proven by a report (al-khabar) from Allāh or the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

Consensus (ijmā‘) relies on the Book and the Sunnah, as ijmā‘ must be founded on evidence from either the Book or the Sunnah. These are the sources for acquiring knowledge among Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah.

A fundamental principle leads to salvation from misguidance: Whoever does not adhere to this principle will undoubtedly fall into misguidance and will not belong to the saved sect or the aided group. That principle is:

فَهُمُ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ يَجِبُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَلَى وَفْقِ فَهْمِ السَّلَفِ الصَّالِحِ

“Understanding the Book and the Sunnah must align with the understanding of the righteous predecessors (as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ).”

So if we want to understand a text from the Book of Allāh or the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, our understanding must align with the righteous predecessors. This is because the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, when he mentioned the ḥadīth regarding the division [of the Ummah], said:

«وَسَتَفْتَرُقُ أُمَّتِي عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً، كُلُّهَا فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا وَاحِدَةً، قَالُوا: مَنْ هِيَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: مَنْ كَانَ عَلَى مِثْلِ مَا أَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَأَصْحَابِي»

“My Ummah will split into seventy-three sects, all in the Fire except one.” They said: **“Who is it, O Messenger of Allāh?”** He said: **“Those who are upon what I and my Companions are upon.”** [Reported by at-Tirmidhī in his *Jāmi‘*, and by al-Ḥākim in his *Mustadrak*; authenticated by Ibn Taymiyyah and declared ḥasan by al-Albānī]

So he made the sign of the saved sect: Following the Companions.

Because the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ witnessed the revelation and knew the actual events, Allāh testified to the purity of their hearts. He chose them—Exalted is He—to accompany His Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and made them His ministers. They are, therefore, the most deserving people in understanding the Book and the Sunnah.

The truth can't be outside their understanding. Therefore, to be on the truth, we must follow their understanding. Allāh – the Most High – says:

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

“And the foremost to embrace Islām of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, and those who follow them in righteousness – Allāh is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever. That is the great success.” [Sūrah at-Tawbah: 100]

So Allāh ﷺ has stated that He is pleased with the Companions absolutely, and He is pleased with those who came after them under one condition: following the Companions in righteousness.

This is a testimony from Allāh for the Companions. Therefore, whoever wishes to be among those with whom Allāh is pleased and whom He will enter into His Paradise should follow the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in righteousness.

For this reason, we refer to this principle as “a principle that brings salvation from misguidance.”

The righteous predecessors (as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ) consist of the Companions and those who followed them in righteousness from the two generations that came after the generation of the Companions.

Through this principle, Ahl as-Sunnah have established a scale for measuring every group and sect. Therefore, if we want to determine whether a group or sect adheres to the correct 'Aqīdah, we evaluate it using this scale.

We examine the foundations of the group or sect, and if we find that they adhere to the understanding of the righteous predecessors, we know that it is a saved sect and that they are Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah.

But if they stray from this principle, we know it is a misguided sect.

This scale has been established by Allāh – the Most High – and His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Lesson 3: Belief in Allāh

Belief in Allāh is founded on singling out Allāh – the Most High – with Tawḥīd. True faith cannot exist without Tawḥīd, and whenever Tawḥīd is lacking, faith in Allāh – the Most High – is also lacking.

Tawḥīd of Allāh – the Most High – falls under three matters:

1. **Tawḥīd of Allāh in His Lordship** (Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah)
2. **Tawḥīd of Allāh in His Names and Attributes** (Tawḥīd al-Asmā' wa aṣ-Ṣifāt)
3. **Tawḥīd of Allāh in His Right to be Worshipped Alone** (Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah)

First: Tawḥīd of Allāh in His Lordship – meaning: singling out Allāh with His actions, Glorified is He.

Example: The belief that the Creator is Allāh alone, the Provider is Allāh alone, and the Giver of life is Allāh alone – so we single out Allāh – the Most High – with His actions.

Second: [Concerning His Names and Attributes] – Allāh is the All-Hearing (as-Samī'). This Name of Allāh – the Most High – is specifically attributed to Him, and His Attribute is Hearing (as-Sam'). These Names and Attributes must be uniquely affirmed for Allāh – the Most High.

Perfect hearing, sight, and complete power exist only for Allāh, as do all other attributes.

Third: Tawḥīd of Allāh in His Right to be Worshipped Alone – meaning: singling out Allāh in worship.

Example: Singling out Allāh with supplication, prostration, and sacrifice. Therefore, none is to be supplicated to except Allāh, none is to be

sacrificed for except Allāh – the Most High – and none is to be prostrated to except Allāh.

Fruits of Belief in Allāh

Belief in Allāh yields numerous fruits highlighted in the texts of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. I will provide five examples, which are not meant to be an exhaustive list:

First, belief in Allāh – the Most High – brings happiness in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever seeks happiness will find it only through belief in Allāh – the Most High. The evidence for this is His saying – the Most High:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer – We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely reward them according to the best of what they used to do.” [Sūrah an-Nahl: 97]

Thus, a good life in this world and the Hereafter is achieved through belief in Allāh and righteous actions.

Second, the friendship and support of Allāh – the Most High. Whoever wants the support of Allāh must recognize belief in Him, the Most High. Allāh says:

﴿وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And Allāh is the Guardian of the believers.” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān: 68]
Meaning: the Supporter of the believers.

Third: Entry into Paradise and the enjoyment of its pleasures. There is no pleasure in Paradise greater than the sight of Allāh – the Most High – and entry into Paradise is attained through the realization of belief in Allāh – the Most High. Allāh says:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سُدَّخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدَّخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴾

“And those who believe and do righteous deeds – We will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. They will have therein purified spouses, and We will admit them to a pleasant shade.” [Sūrah an-Nisā’: 57]

Fourth: Establishment on the earth and succession within it. Allāh – the Most High – says:

﴿ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴾

“Allāh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession in the earth as He granted it to those before them, and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security – [saying]: ‘They worship Me and do not associate anything with Me.’ But whoever disbelieves after that – then those are the defiantly disobedient.” [Sūrah an-Nūr: 55]

So whoever desires establishment and succession in the earth must realize belief in Allāh – the Most High.

Fifth: Complete safety and guidance. Allāh – the Most High –says:

﴿الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا ءِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ الْاَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ﴾

“Those who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice will have security and are rightly guided.” [Sūrah al-An‘ām: 82]

Lesson 4: The Lordship (Rubūbiyyah) of Allāh

The Lordship of Allāh – the Most High – is founded on two principles:

1. The existence of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ.
2. Singling out Allāh – the Most High – with His actions, or singling Him out in creation, ownership, and control (tadbīr).

As for the existence of Allāh, it is something innate (fiṭrī), meaning Allāh created the creation while they are naturally inclined to know Him, the Most High. As the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ says:

«مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ، أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ، أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ»

“Every newborn is born upon the fiṭrah (natural inclination), but his parents make him a Jew, Christian, or Magian.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

So the newborn is born with an affirmation of the existence of Allāh – the Most High. The existence of Allāh, in addition to being an innate matter, is also affirmed by the Sharī‘ah, the intellect, and sensory perception.

As for the Sharī‘ah, then Allāh’s saying – the Most High:

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

“All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of the worlds.” [Sūrah al-Fātiḥah: 2]— affirms that there is a Lord of the worlds.

Also, His saying – the Most High:

﴿ اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ﴾

“Allāh is the Creator of all things.” [Sūrah az-Zumar: 62] — affirms that He is the Creator. So Allāh is the Creator, and everything else is creation.

Regarding intellect, when people reflect on creation, they notice that beings, such as mankind, came into existence after not having existed. A human did not exist and then came into being. This existence must have a cause. Intellect confirms with certainty that every newly occurring thing requires a reason, and every created thing necessitates a Creator.

The Shari‘ah and the innate disposition identify this Creator as Allāh.

Regarding sensory perception, when we observe the precision of creation and the fact that it operates within an unchanging system, such as the heavens not falling upon the earth, the earth having mountains that stabilize it, and the seas surrounding it, all of this indicates the existence of a Creator.

Even the animals acknowledge the existence of Allāh – the Most High. Furthermore, even inanimate objects glorify the praises of Allāh – the Most High – as He says:

﴿ تَسْبِيحٌ لَّهُ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ ﴾

﴿ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ ﴾

“The seven heavens and the earth and all therein glorify Him. And there is nothing except that it glorifies His Praise, but you do not understand their glorification.” [Sūrah al-Isrā’: 44]

As for the second matter: singling out Allāh – the Most High – for His actions, meaning to single Him out in creation, for there is no Creator except Allāh. We also single Him out in ownership, for there is no true Owner except Allāh – the Most High. Additionally, we single Him out in control and regulation, for the One who manages the affairs of creation is Allāh – the Most High – alone.

Therefore, the Lordship of Allāh – the Most High – is based upon: belief in His existence and singling Him out with His actions.

Now we move to an important matter: Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah (Oneness of Allāh in Lordship) alone is not sufficient for true belief in Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ. This means that whoever affirms it but does not acknowledge Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah (Allāh's sole right to be worshipped) is not considered a believer in Allāh – the Most High.

This is evidenced by the fact that the polytheists of the Arabs affirmed Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah. As Allāh addressed His Prophet:

﴿مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ لِيَقُولَنَّ اللَّهُ﴾

“And if you were to ask them, ‘Who created the heavens and the earth and subjected the sun and the moon?’ They would surely say: Allāh.”
[Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt: 61]

Despite this, they worshipped Allāh and others alongside Him. They affirmed the Lordship of Allāh and that He – the Most High – is the Creator, the Owner, the Provider. Yet the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ fought them and deemed their blood lawful. This is because this Tawḥīd, by itself, is not sufficient.

Thus, we must pay close attention to this vital issue: Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah was affirmed by the Arab polytheists, so it alone is insufficient as belief in Allāh, the Most High.

Nullifiers of Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah

What is meant by this is: What is the matter that, if committed by a person, renders him no longer someone who affirms Allāh's Lordship – the Most High – and invalidates his Tawḥīd in this category?

These nullifiers are:

1. Denying the existence of Allāh – the Most High – outwardly
2. Affirming an independent actor alongside Allāh – the Most High
3. Ascribing blessings to other than Allāh – the Most High – as if they are independent

The First Nullifier: Denying the existence of Allāh outwardly, such as by claiming that Allāh does not exist, as Pharaoh did when he said:

﴿ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ﴾

“I am your lord, the most high.” [Sūrah an-Nāzi‘āt: 24]

This was an outward denial, because Pharaoh did not deny the existence of Allāh in his heart. The evidence is the statement of Allāh:

﴿ وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ﴾

“And they denied them wrongfully and arrogantly, though their hearts were convinced.” [Sūrah an-Naml: 14]

The reason for their denial of Allāh’s existence was:

﴿ ظَلَمًا وَعُلُوًّا ﴾

“Wrongfully and arrogantly.” [Sūrah an-Naml: 14]

This also applies to atheists who outwardly deny the existence of Allāh – the Most High – yet, in reality, affirm His existence.

They are consumed by doubts that shroud their hearts until one of them becomes convinced that there is no Lord for the world – that existence came about by mere chance.

As these doubts intensify and increasingly dominate their hearts, their outward denial becomes more pronounced. However, when the

doubts diminish, they hesitate and feel uncertain. Occasionally, their inherent disposition resurfaces, and they acknowledge the existence of Allāh – the Most High – even if they do not express it publicly.

The Second Nullifier: Affirming an independent actor alongside Allāh – meaning: that a slave acknowledges the presence of a creator alongside Allāh, or recognizes an owner in addition to Allāh, or identifies a manager (of the universe) who operates independently of Allāh’s control and ownership.

Whoever affirms an independent actor alongside Allāh has nullified his Tawḥīd.

For example, if someone asserts that the stars independently affect the Earth, then that person has nullified their belief in Allāh’s exclusive Lordship.

Also, whoever believes in the astrological houses and thinks they affect reality by themselves, without Allāh, and looks into them to infer their condition and future, while believing that they influence matters independently of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ, is nullifying their Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah.

Among the examples is the affirmation that certain things can influence a person independently. Some people assume that a specific illness affects itself; thus, they believe contagion spreads automatically. This undermines belief in Allāh’s Lordship.

Similarly, if someone leaves his house and encounters something he dislikes, resulting in a pessimistic outlook – believing that it affects him independently of Allāh – then this, too, nullifies his Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah.

The Third Nullifier: Attributing a blessing to someone or something other than Allāh in a way that suggests independence.

For example, someone might say, “Were it not for so-and-so, I would have fallen ill.” This belief suggests that the saint independently causes such things, leading to the attribution of favor to him. This perspective nullifies belief in Allāh’s Lordship.

Lesson 5: Allāh's Names and Attributes

Allāh's Names and Attributes are based on three foundational principles:

1. Affirming what Allāh affirmed for Himself, or what His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ affirmed for Him, and denying what Allāh or His Messenger denied. The principle of Ahl as-Sunnah is: we do not go beyond the Qur'ān and Sunnah in affirmation or negation.
2. Denying resemblance in the nature of Allāh's Attributes.
3. Cutting off hope of knowing the exact nature (kayfiyyah) of Allāh's Names and Attributes.

As for the first principle — affirming what Allāh affirmed and denying what He denied — its meaning is this: any Name or Attribute that Allāh – the Most High – affirmed for Himself, or that His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ — who does not speak from his own desire — affirmed, is obligatory for the slave to affirm.

And likewise, everything that Allāh denied about Himself is obligatory upon the slave to deny it.

So we submit to the report from Allāh – the Most High – and the report from His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, for the One who affirmed the Attribute is Allāh, and He is more knowledgeable about Himself than others. If this were not truly His Attribute, He would not have affirmed it for Himself.

The principle of Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah regarding affirmation and denial is that nothing is affirmed or denied except through the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

We do not affirm a Name or Attribute except by the Qur'ān or Sunnah, and we do not deny except with the Qur'ān or Sunnah. As for the intellect, it has no place in matters of the unseen.

Example of affirmation: Allāh's statement – the Most High – regarding His Names:

﴿اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ﴾

“Allāh! None has the right to be worshipped except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of all that exists.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 255]— He affirmed “al-Ḥayy” (the Ever-Living), and “al-Qayyūm” (the Sustainer).

And His statement – the Most High – regarding His Attributes:

﴿وَرَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ﴾

“And your Lord is the Self-Sufficient, the Possessor of Mercy.” [Sūrah al-An'ām: 133] — He affirmed the Attribute of mercy for Himself.

Example of negation: Allāh – the Most High – says:

﴿لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ﴾

“Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 255]— So He denied Himself slumber (meaning: drowsiness) and sleep.

Regarding the second principle — denying resemblance in the qualities of Allāh's Attributes — its meaning is that whatever Allāh affirms for Himself, the slave must affirm while denying that it resembles creation.

He should say, for example: Allāh's life is not like the life of the creation. Allāh's mercy is not like the mercy of the creation. Allāh's rising over the Throne (istiwā') is not like the rising of the creation because Allāh,

the Most High, attributed the attribute to Himself, making it specific to Him. No one shares it with Him.

As He – the Most High – says:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” [Sūrah ash-Shūrā: 11]

Allāh – the Most High – is the One who affirmed the Attributes for Himself, and He is the One who says:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him.” There is no contradiction between the two. So we affirm the Attributes without resemblance. This is the balanced understanding that Allāh has granted to Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah.

As for the third principle — cutting off all hope of knowing the nature (kayfiyyah) of Allāh’s Attributes — its meaning is that one must abandon any attempt to understand how Allāh’s Attributes are. For Allāh is part of the unseen, and He has not informed us of the manner of His Attributes.

For example, Allāh’s rising above the Throne (istiwā’) has a specific manner, but the knowledge of how He rose is unknown to us. This is because Allāh has not informed us of its modality, and He is part of the unseen, and nothing is comparable to Him. Thus, all avenues for understanding how His Attributes are have been blocked.

These three foundational principles form the basis of Tawḥīd regarding Allāh’s Names and Attributes. A deficiency in any of these principles invalidates one’s Tawḥīd concerning Allāh’s Names and Attributes.

Nullifiers of Tawḥīd of the Names and Attributes

These nullifiers fall under two categories:

1. **Taḥbīh (resemblance/likening)**
2. **Ta'ṭīl (negation/denial)**

The First Nullifier: Taḥbīh — this term affirms an Attribute of Allāh while asserting similarity to creation. For example, saying: Allāh's face is like the face of a created being, or Allāh's rising over the Throne is like the rising of a created being.

Affirming the resemblance between Allāh and His creation constitutes disbelief, as the creation is inherently deficient. Comparing the Perfect One with what is deficient suggests deficiency in the Perfect One. Attributing any deficiency to Allāh is also disbelief, as Allāh, the Most High, says:

﴿فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ﴾

“So do not set up rivals to Allāh.” [Sūrah an-Naḥl: 74]

And He says:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him.” [Sūrah ash-Shūrā: 11]

Every sect opposing Ahl as-Sunnah regarding Names and Attributes has fallen into taḥbīh (likening Allāh to creation).

The Second Nullifier: Ta'ṭīl — it is the denial of the Names or Attributes of Allāh – the Most High – or the denial of some of them. For example, saying: Allāh does not rise over the Throne, or that Allāh does not have a Face that befits His majesty, and similar statements.

To such a denier, it is said: Allāh affirms, yet you deny. Are you more knowledgeable than Allāh?

The one who commits taʿṭīl resembles the polytheists. As Allāh says about them:

﴿وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ﴾

“And they disbelieve in the Most Merciful.” [Sūrah ar-Raʿd: 30] — meaning: they do not affirm the Name “ar-Raḥmān” for Allāh.

Under taʿṭīl fall two additional concepts:

1. Taʿwīl (interpretive distortion)
2. Tafwīḍ (claiming ignorance of meaning)

What is meant by taʿwīl is rejecting the apparent meaning of a text and affirming a new meaning.

An example of this: taking the statement of Allāh:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾

“The Most Merciful rose over the Throne.” [Sūrah ṬāHā: 5] And rejecting its precise meaning, which claims that Allāh’s rising (istiwāʾ) over the Throne does not refer to rising, but rather to conquering it. Thus, a new meaning is imposed that contradicts the clearly understood interpretation of the text.

But the obligation is to understand the Attributes of Allāh – the Most High – according to their apparent meanings, based on what the Arabic language indicates. This is the ʿAqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamāʿah. Therefore, we say: istiwāʾ here means rising above, because that is what the Arabic language suggests. And this ascending befits His majesty.

As for tafwīḍ — it involves rejecting the apparent meaning of a text and claiming ignorance of its interpretation, such as stating about the Āyah:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾

“The Most Merciful rose over the Throne” – that the istiwā’ does not mean rising, but “Allāh knows best what it means.”

Tafwīḍ is not the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnah. The way of Ahl as-Sunnah is to affirm the apparent meaning of the text and not to claim ignorance of its meaning. Instead, they affirm the meaning and refrain from any speculation about its modality (how it is), as that is beyond human comprehension.

Both ta’wīl and tafwīḍ are forms of ta’ṭīl, and ta’ṭīl nullifies the Tawhīd of Allāh’s Names and Attributes.

These nullifiers are all summarized under one term: ilhād (deviation/heresy).

Allāh – the Most High – says:

﴿وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“And leave those who deviate concerning His Names. They will be recompensed for what they used to do.” [Sūrah al-A’rāf: 180]

He commanded the abandonment of those who commit ilhād in His Names, and this includes a prohibition of ilhād itself.

Ilhād is the deviation from the obligations concerning Allāh’s Names and Attributes.

For example:

- The obligation is to affirm what Allāh has recognized for Himself, but the ilhādī denies it, thereby deviating from what is required.
- The obligation is to affirm the Attributes without resemblance. However, one who compares (makes tashbīh) affirms with resemblance and thus commits ilhād.

- The obligation is to avoid seeking to know the manner (kayfiyyah), but the one who does so commits ilḥād by affirming something unknown and unreported.

All of what we've explained can be summarized in a single phrase:

إثباتٌ بلا تمثيل، وتنزيهٌ بلا تعطيل.

“Affirmation without resemblance, and transcendence without denial.”

So, if you affirm, then do not affirm resemblance. And if you declare Allāh free of defects (tanzīh), do not fall into denial (ta‘ṭīl).

And it is necessary to know that all of Allāh’s Names are ḥusnā (most excellent), meaning: there are no names more excellent than the Names of Allāh, not in wording and not in meaning.

And His Attributes — Glorified and Exalted is He — are all Attributes of absolute perfection, untouched by any deficiency whatsoever. For Allāh is Perfect, and He attributes to Himself only that which is perfect.

Whether these Attributes are:

Intrinsic Attributes (ṣifāt dhātiyyah): those that are inseparable from His Essence, such as life (ḥayāh),

Or Action-based Attributes (ṣifāt fi‘liyyah): those connected to His Will, such as that He creates when He wills, speaks when He wills — Glorified and Exalted is He — and provides sustenance when He wills.

In conclusion, we emphasize an important issue: the stance of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh (May Allāh elevate his rank and grant him peace) regarding the Attributes of Allāh.

The Companions of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ received their knowledge directly from him, and were graduates of his school. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to inform them about the Attributes of Allāh, and he would recite to them the Qur’ān, which contains descriptions of Allāh’s

Attributes — nearly every Āyah of the Book of Allāh either begins or ends with mention of His Attributes.

So the Companions heard these Āyāt, but what was their response to these texts?

The answer is: their stance is exemplified in the ḥadīth of Abū Razīn:

«صَحِحَكَ رَبُّنَا مِنْ قَنَوطِ عِبَادِهِ وَقُرْبِ غَيْرِهِ. قَالَ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؛ أَوَيَضْحَكُ رَبُّنَا؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. قُلْتُ: لَنْ نَعْدَمَ مِنْ رَبِّ يَضْحَكُ خَيْرًا»

“Our Lord laughs at the despair of His slaves and the nearness of His mercy.” I said: “O Messenger of Allāh, does our Lord laugh?” He said: “Yes.” I said: “We will never be deprived of good from a Lord who laughs.” [Reported by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan*, and authenticated by al-Albānī in *as-Silsilah aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah*]

So this noble Companion, upon hearing from the Prophet ﷺ the affirmation that Allāh laughs — in a manner befitting His Majesty — did not respond with: “How can Allāh laugh?” Nor did he object and say: “This resembles the creation!” as those polluted by the filth of anthropomorphism or negation might say.

One might ask: Why?

The answer is that it was clearly established for them through the Prophet’s instruction — for them and the rest of the Companions — that nothing is like Allāh and that every Attribute which Allāh has attributed to Himself or which the Prophet ﷺ affirmed for Him is affirmed without resemblance.

So the Companion knew that this attribute belongs to Allāh — the Most High — and that Allāh described Himself with it so that we may worship Him accordingly. Thus, he said:

«لَنْ نَعْدَمَ مِنْ رَبِّ يَضْحَكُ خَيْرًا»

“We will never be deprived of good from a Lord who laughs.”

This is the required response for every Muslim. It is upon him:

- To affirm the Attributes that Allāh has confirmed for Himself, or that His Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has confirmed for Him,
- Without saying “how,”
- Without likening them to creation.

Then he should reflect on the implications of this attribute in his servitude to Allāh — the Most High — to realize true servitude (‘ubūdiyyah) through loving Allāh, hoping in Him, and fearing Him, until he tastes a sweetness of faith that is beyond description.

Lesson 6: Allāh's Right to be Worshipped Alone (Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah)

Singling out Allāh – the Most High – in His right to be worshipped is the very matter over which there was a dispute between the Prophets and their peoples. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ fought the polytheists of the Arabs due to their violation of Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah.

When the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to them:

﴿قُولُوا: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ تَفْلِحُوا، قَالُوا: ﴿أَجْعَلِ الْأَلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ﴾﴾

“Say: Lā ilāha illā Allāh, and you will be successful,” **They responded: “Has he made the gods one god? Indeed, this is a strange thing.”** [Sūrah Ṣād: 5]

And Allāh says regarding them:

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ﴾

“Indeed, they, when it was said to them, ‘Lā ilāha illā Allāh,’ they were arrogant.” [Sūrah aṣ-Ṣāffāt: 35]

This Tawḥīd is why Allāh sent the Messengers and revealed the Books. Allāh says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ﴾

“And We certainly sent into every nation a Messenger, [saying], ‘Worship Allāh and avoid ṭāghūt (false gods).’” [Sūrah an-Naḥl: 36]

It is the first obligation upon the slave. Allāh says:

﴿فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

“So know that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allāh.” [Sūrah Muḥammad: 19]

And when the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sent Mu‘ādh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to the people of Yemen, he said:

«فَلْيَكُنْ أَوَّلَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ: شَهَادَةٌ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ»

“Let the first thing you call them to be: the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.” [Reported by Muslim]

This introduction demonstrates the importance of knowing the Tawḥīd of Allāh in His worship.

Understanding Allāh’s Right to be Worshipped Alone (Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah) is built upon two key matters:

1. Understanding the meaning of “al-Ilāh” (deity).
2. Singling out Allāh – the Most High – in worship.

The First Matter: Understanding the meaning of “al-Ilāh.”

In the Arabic language, al-Ilāh means the one who is worshipped, derived from ‘aliha – ya’lahu – ilāhah, meaning: to worship.

So, Ulūhiyyah of Allāh – the Most High – means that He alone deserves to be worshipped.

This meaning is affirmed by both the language and the legislation (Sharī‘ah).

Thus, when it is said: “Lā ilāha illā Allāh” (There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh), the meaning is: there is no one truly deserving of worship except Allāh.

As Allāh – the Most High – says:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ﴾

“That is because Allāh is the Truth, and what they invoke besides Him is falsehood.” [Sūrah al-Ḥajj: 62]

And He – the Most High – says:

﴿وَمَا مِن إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

“And there is no deity except Allāh.” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān: 62] — meaning: no deity deserves to be worshipped except Allāh. So every object of worship besides Allāh is false.

This phrase — “Lā ilāha illā Allāh” — is the key to entering Islām. Anyone who does not affirm it is a disbeliever.

It includes negation (Lā ilāha) and affirmation (illā Allāh). This demonstrates that true Tawḥīd is established only through both negation and affirmation.

So Tawḥīd is not based solely on negation. If one says, “There is no deity,” then whom does he worship? Negation by itself represents nonexistence, and nonexistence is not to be worshipped.

Likewise, Tawḥīd is not based solely on affirmation. If one were to say “Except Allāh” only, it would still permit associating others with Him — that Allāh is worshipped, but others are worshipped alongside Him.

Thus, true Tawḥīd is only valid when both negation and affirmation are present: negating divinity from everyone except Allāh, and affirming it for Allāh alone. As Allāh – the Most High – says:

﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا﴾

“Worship Allāh and do not associate anything with Him.”

[Sūrah an-Nisā’: 36]

Therefore, those who fulfill this declaration — “Lā ilāha illā Allāh” — have achieved the Tawḥīd of worship (Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah).

The Second Matter: Singling out Allāh – the Most High – in worship. None is to be worshipped except Allāh. Worship that must be directed solely to Allāh – the Most High – is of two types:

1. Worship related to the one performing it, called ta‘abbud.
 2. Worship related to the actions performed, called ‘ibādah
- Ta‘abbud: It is the act of the slave in performing worship. It must be done with complete humility and complete love.

If complete humility is lacking, the action is not worship. If complete love is lacking, the action is not worship. The act becomes true worship only when deep humility and deep love unite.

- ‘Ibādah (worship itself): It is a comprehensive term for everything that Allāh loves and is pleased with — encompassing statements and actions, both outward and inward.

The way to know what Allāh loves and is pleased with is through the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Therefore, if the Prophet informs us that Allāh loves or commands a particular act, it is considered worship. Now let’s move on to an important matter:

Nullifiers of Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah

These nullifiers fall under two categories:

1. Major Shirk (ash-Shirk al-Akbar) — which nullifies the essence of Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah
2. Minor Shirk (ash-Shirk al-Aṣghar) — which nullifies its obligatory completeness

The First Nullifier: Major Shirk

Its definition: To set up a rival with Allāh in worship.

This definition was given by the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and there is no definition more precise than his. He was asked, as is authentically reported in the Ṣaḥīḥayn:

«أَيُّ الذَّنْبِ أَعْظَمُ؟ قَالَ: أَنْ تَجْعَلَ لِلَّهِ نِدًّا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ»

“What is the greatest sin?” He said, “That you set up a rival to Allāh while He created you.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

Whoever worships someone other than Allāh has made that being a rival to Allāh, and has therefore committed major shirk, nullifying the very foundation of Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah.

Example: If someone supplicates to anything other than Allāh with the supplication of worship, or supplicates to someone in matters that only Allāh is capable of, he has fallen into major shirk.

Supplication (du‘ā’) is divided by scholars into two types:

1. Supplication of worship
2. Supplication of request
 - Supplication of worship includes acts such as prayer (ṣalāh), fasting (ṣawm), and others. These are supplications because the

slave performs them in hopes of reaching Paradise — it is as if he is asking Allāh to admit him to Paradise through them.

This supplication can never be directed to anyone other than Allāh under any circumstance. Whoever prays to anyone other than Allāh has committed major shirk.

- Supplication of request: It is when a person asks for something.

This is of two types:

The first type occurs when someone other than Allāh asks for something that only Allāh can provide, such as saying: “O saint, cure my sick relative” — this is major shirk, because healing is solely in the Hands of Allāh.

The second type occurs when someone asks a living being for something they can provide, such as: “Give me water.” This is not considered major shirk in this case, as the request is within that person’s ability.

And among the evidence that directing supplication (du‘ā’) to other than Allāh is shirk is the statement of Allāh – the Most High:

﴿وَلَا تَدْعُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ فَإِنْ فَعَلْتَ

فَأِنَّكَ إِذَا مِنْ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“And do not call upon besides Allāh that which neither benefits you nor harms you. If you do so, you would indeed be one of the wrongdoers.” [Sūrah Yūnus: 106]

And His statement:

﴿وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

“And whoever calls upon, along with Allāh, another deity for which he has no proof, then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Indeed, the disbelievers will not succeed.” [Sūrah al-Mu’minūn: 117]

So Allāh – the Most High – declared that whoever calls upon other than Him is both a wrongdoer and a disbeliever. And His statement:

﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَهُمْ
عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَإِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً وَكَانُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ﴾

“And who is more astray than the one who calls upon besides Allāh that which will not respond to him until the Day of Resurrection, and they are unaware of their supplication? And when the people are gathered, they will be enemies to them and will deny their worship.” [Sūrah al-Aḥqāf: 5–6]

No one is more misguided than someone who calls upon anything other than Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Another example is seeking rescue (istighāthah) from anything other than Allāh, such as a person who is in hardship and turns to the people of the graves for help. For example, saying, “O my master, I want a child,” or “O so-and-so, I want wealth.” All of this is major shirk.

Accordingly, whoever goes to the graves and calls upon those buried there, or seeks rescue from them, has fallen into major shirk, and his Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah is nullified at its root.

There is a doubt that some people bring up. They say: “I am weak and negligent in my duties to Allāh – the Most High. But this saint has a high status with Allāh. So I call upon him to intercede for me before Allāh.”

We reply: this claim is the exact claim of the polytheists of the Arabs — those whom the Prophet ﷺ declared disbelievers and against whom he waged war and made their blood lawful.

Allāh said:

﴿ قُلْ أَتُنَبِّئُونَ اللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ سُبْحَانَهُ

وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

“And they worship besides Allāh that which neither harms them nor benefits them, and they say: “These are our intercessors with Allāh.”

[Sūrah Yūnus: 18]

So the polytheists worshipped other than Allāh, meaning they supplicated to them, sought help from them, and offered sacrifices to them. And their argument was: “These are our intercessors with Allāh.” — meaning: we are sinful, and these figures have status with Allāh, so we want them to intercede for us with Allāh.

Allāh – the Most High – responded to them, saying:

﴿ قُلْ أَتُنَبِّئُونَ اللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ سُبْحَانَهُ

وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

“Say: Do you inform Allāh of something He does not know in the heavens or the earth? Exalted is He and High above what they associate with Him.” [Sūrah Yūnus: 18]

Do you inform Him what does not exist in the heavens or the earth?

“Exalted is He and High above what they associate with Him.” – Allāh labeled this act as shirk, thus showing that supplicating to other than Allāh is shirk.

Another example of major shirk is slaughtering for anything other than Allāh. For example, when a person goes to a grave and sacrifices an animal for the person buried in it, hoping to get closer to them, this is major shirk.

Because slaughtering is an act of worship — and Allāh has commanded it — He says:

﴿ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ ﴾

“So pray to your Lord and sacrifice (to Him alone).” [Sūrah al-Kawthar: 2]

So to direct worship to anything other than Allāh is shirk.

Causes of Major Shirk

1. **Exaggeration regarding the righteous (ghulūww fī aṣ-ṣāliḥīn).**
Ghulūww means: to go beyond the limits in praising and honoring them.

This was the case with the people of Nūḥ, as Allāh said:

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا ﴾

“And they said: ‘Do not abandon your gods. Do not abandon Wadd, nor Suwā‘, nor Yaghūth, and Ya‘ūq, and Nasr.’” [Sūrah Nūḥ: 23]

These were names of righteous men from the people of Nūḥ. When they died, statues were erected upon their graves. The intention at first was that when people saw them, they would be reminded of worship and become more energetic in devotion.

This practice continued, and when those who had set up the statues died, the next generation came. Then the shayṭān inspired them: “Your ancestors did not erect these statues except to worship them.” As a result, the idols were worshipped besides Allāh.

Thus, the shirk of the people of Nūḥ was due to exaggeration regarding the righteous. Allāh sent Nūḥ to call them to Lā ilāha illā Allāh — to worship Allāh alone, as He says:

﴿ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١﴾
 قَالَ يَتَقَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُم نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٢﴾ أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَأَتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿٣﴾

“Indeed, We sent Nūḥ to his people saying: ‘Warn your people before there comes to them a painful punishment.’ He said: ‘O my people, indeed I am to you a clear warner, that you worship Allāh and fear Him and obey me.’” [Sūrah Nūḥ: 1–3]

Secondly: Venerating the graves of the righteous—such as by constructing structures over them or placing lanterns around them—is a means that leads to falling into major Shirk.

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the Jews and the Christians because they took the graves of their prophets as masājid.

Rulings concerning major Shirk:

First: The one who commits it will remain in the Fire of Hell forever and never exit. Allāh, the Exalted, says:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
 أُؤْتِيكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿١﴾

“Indeed, those who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture and the polytheists will be in the Fire of Hell, abiding therein. They are the worst of creatures.” [Sūrah al-Bayyinah: 6]

Second: The one who commits it will never enter Paradise at all. Allāh, the Most High, says:

﴿إِنَّهُم مِّنْ يُشْرِكِ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَهُ النَّارُ وَمَا

لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ﴾

“Indeed, whoever associates others with Allāh, then Allāh has forbidden Paradise for him, and his abode is the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 72]

Third: The one who commits it will not be forgiven. Allāh, the Glorious, says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ

فَقَدْ أَفْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا﴾

“Indeed, Allāh does not forgive that partners be associated with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And whoever associates others with Allāh has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.” [Sūrah an-Nisā': 48]

Fourth: All of the good deeds of the one who commits it will be nullified if he dies upon it without repenting. Allāh عزَّ وجلَّ said, addressing His Prophets:

﴿وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“But if they had associated others with Allāh, then worthless for them would be whatever they were doing.” [Sūrah al-An‘ām: 88]

And He said, addressing the noblest of creation ﷺ:

﴿لَيْنِ أَشْرَكَتَ لِيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

“And verily, it has been revealed to you and to those before you: if you associate [others with Allāh], your deeds will surely be nullified, and you will certainly be among the losers.” [Sūrah az-Zumar: 65]

Because of this, I warn against major Shirk, as its consequences are severe. No one can guard against Shirk unless he first learns about it.

The Second Nullifier: Minor Shirk

Definition: It is what the Lawgiver (i.e., the Sharī‘ah) has called Shirk or that which resembles it in meaning and serves as a pathway to major Shirk.

There must be two things present for something to be considered minor Shirk:

First: That the Lawgiver has referred to it as Shirk or something similar to it, like disbelief, or has categorized it as a minor association.

Second: That it is a means leading to major Shirk.

Example: Swearing by anything other than Allāh, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ حَلَفَ بِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ»

“Whoever swears by other than Allāh has committed Shirk.” [Reported by Abū Dāwūd]

Thus, the Lawgiver has called it Shirk, which leads to major Shirk because one might glorify what is sworn by as one glorifies Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He).

Swearing by anything other than Allāh includes statements such as: “By the Ka‘bah,” “by my father’s mercy,” “by your life,” or “by my mother’s head,” and similar phrases.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ كَانَ حَالِفًا فَلْيَحْلِفْ بِاللَّهِ أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ»

“Whoever must swear, let him swear by Allāh or remain silent.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī]

Another example is: Taking something as a cause that is not a legislated or decreed means, while believing that it is a cause, like a person hanging a talisman (tamīmah) to repel the evil eye, then depending upon it. If someone does that, he has fallen into minor Shirk because he made it a means while it is not.

Rulings concerning minor Shirk:

First: Its doer will be punished in the Fire, but he will eventually be removed. He will not remain in the Fire of Hell eternally.

Second: Allāh does not forgive it, as He says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ﴾

“Indeed, Allāh does not forgive that partners be associated with Him.” [Sūrah an-Nisā’: 48]

This Āyah is general, encompassing both major and minor Shirk.

With this, we conclude the first pillar of the pillars of Īmān, which is belief in Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He). We discussed Allāh's Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), then His Names and Attributes (Asmā' wa-Ṣifāt), then His Divinity and sole right to be worshipped (Ulūhiyyah).

A person may ask: What is the relationship between these categories?

The answer: The relationship between Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah, Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah, and Tawḥīd al-Asmā' wa-Ṣifāt is that:

Tawḥīd of the Names and Attributes encompasses both Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah and Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah. This is because among Allāh's Names is ar-Rabb (the Lord), which implies Lordship. Additionally, among Allāh's Names is Allāh, which means His right to be worshipped alone.

As for Tawḥīd ar-Rubūbiyyah, it necessitates Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah. This means that whoever affirms complete Lordship for Allāh must consequently worship Him alone.

As for Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah, it encompasses the affirmation of Rubūbiyyah. Therefore, everyone who worships Allāh must also affirm His Lordship.

This is the connection between the types of Tawḥīd from the perspective of their relation to Allāh.

From the slave's perspective, there is another relationship: interdependence. The slave is obligated to fulfill the Tawḥīd of Lordship, Tawḥīd of Worship, and Tawḥīd of the Names and Attributes.

Lesson 7: Belief in the Angels

Belief in the Angels is one of the pillars of True Islāmic Faith (al-Īmān). A slave's faith is not complete without it, as Allāh the Most High says:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلًّا
 ضَلًّا بَعِيدًا ﴾

“And whoever disbelieves in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day has certainly gone far astray.” [Sūrah an-Nisā': 136]

Who are the Angels we must believe in?

The Angels are from the unseen world. We have not seen them, and nothing is similar to them, so we cannot know who they are except through the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

According to the Book and Sunnah:

They are spiritual beings, meaning pure souls. Allāh عزَّوَجَلَّ says regarding Jibrīl (Gabriel):

﴿ فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴾

“We sent to her Our Spirit, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects.” [Sūrah Maryam: 17] — He referred to him as a *spirit* (rūḥ).

The rūḥ (spirit) is not just a meaning or abstract concept but a real and independent entity. So, Angels are spirits with specific qualities.

Allāh created them from light, as mentioned in the authentic ḥadīth of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, where the Prophet (May Allāh elevate his rank and grant him peace) said:

«خُلِقَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ نُورٍ»

“The Angels were created from light.” [Reported by Muslim] — and the light mentioned here is created light.

They do not eat or drink. Allāh, the Exalted, says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلَمًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ جَاءَ

بِعَجَلٍ حَيْنٍ ﴿١١﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَى أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾

“And verily, there came Our Messengers to Ibrāhīm with glad tidings. They said: Salām (peace be upon you). He answered: Salām (peace be upon you) and hastened to entertain them with a roasted calf. But he mistrusted them when he saw their hands did not reach for it.” [Sūrah Hūd: 69–70]

They are magnificent in form, meaning their creation is immense. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saw Jibrīl in his actual form, and he had blocked the horizon between the heavens and the earth. The Prophet also said:

«أُذُنِي لِي أَنْ أُحَدِّثَ عَنْ مَلِكٍ مِنْ مَلَائِكَةِ حَمَلَةِ الْعَرْشِ، مَا بَيْنَ أُذُنِي إِلَى عَاتِقِي»

مَسِيرَةَ سَبْعِ مِائَةِ عَامٍ»

“Permission has been granted for me to speak about an Angel among the bearers of the Throne: the distance between his earlobe and his shoulder is the journey of seven hundred years.” [Reported by Abū Dāwūd] — This indicates the greatness of their creation.

They are beautiful in appearance, meaning their form is pleasing. Allāh described Jibrīl as:

﴿ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَى﴾

“Endowed with might and beauty, he rose and appeared in his true form.” [Sūrah an-Najm: 6]

And the women who saw Yūsuf said:

﴿حَسَّ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ﴾

“Perfect is Allāh! This is no mortal; this is none other than a noble Angel!” [Sūrah Yūsuf: 31] — because it was known among them that Angels are beautifully formed.

They have wings, as Allāh says:

﴿جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أجنحةٍ مثنى وثلاث وربع﴾

“Who made the Angels messengers having wings — two, three, or four.” [Sūrah Fāṭir: 1]

They also have hands, hearing, sitting, and descent, among other attributes affirmed in the Qur’ān and Sunnah.

How to believe in the Angels:

Belief in the Angels can be either **general** or **detailed**.

- **General belief:** This is the minimum requirement for a person to be considered a believer in the Angels. It is to believe in their existence. Whoever does not believe in their existence cannot be considered a believer in them.

Allāh, Glorious and Exalted, says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلْنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ جَاءَ

بِعَجَلٍ حَيْنٍ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَى أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ ﴿٦٧﴾﴾

“And verily, there came Our Messengers to Ibrāhīm with glad tidings. They said: Salām (peace be upon you). He answered: Salām (peace be upon you) and hastened to entertain them with a roasted calf. But he mistrusted them when he saw their hands did not reach for it.” [Sūrah Hūd: 69–70]

This Āyah proves that Angels exist—they are alive and they speak.

Even those who rejected the Messengers—like the people of Nūḥ, ‘Ād, and others—still believed in the existence of Angels, for they said:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً﴾

“Had Allāh willed, He would have sent down Angels.” [Sūrah al-Mu’minūn: 24]

- **Detailed belief:** This is based on what has been mentioned specifically in the Qur’ān and Sunnah. It is divided into the following categories:

First category: Belief in those Angels whose names we know by name—such as Jibrīl (Gabriel), Mikā’īl (Michael), Isrāfil, Mālik the keeper of Hellfire, Munkar and Nakīr, Hārūt and Mārūt. We must believe in their names in detail.

A note: The name ‘Azrā’īl is not established as the name of the Angel of Death in the Qur’ān or Sunnah. What is mentioned is Malak al-Mawt (Angel of Death). Therefore, we should not refer to him as ‘Azrā’īl; instead, we should say: Allāh knows best about his name.

Second category: Belief in the attributes of the Angels established through the Qur’ān and Sunnah. For example, we know Jibrīl has six

hundred wings—this and other attributes must be believed in as they are reported.

Third category: Belief in the actions of the Angels. Allāh has assigned them specific duties, and they never disobey Him. They do what they are commanded. Therefore, if we learn about some of their actions from the Qur’ān and Sunnah, we must believe in them accordingly. For instance:

- Jibrīl is entrusted with revelation.
- Mikā’īl is responsible for rain.
- The Angel of Death is tasked with taking souls.
- Some Angels are recorders of deeds, as Allāh says:

﴿أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ بَلَىٰ وَرُسُلْنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ﴾

“Do they think we do not hear their secrets and private counsel? Yes, [We do], and our messengers are recording it.” [Sūrah az-Zukhruf: 80]

And there are other examples of the actions of the Angels.

We now move to an important topic:

The Impact of Belief in the Angels on One’s Worship and Conduct:

Belief in the Angels results in love for them because they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them; they do as they are ordered. When the slave loves the Angels, he befriends them and takes those who are hostile to them as enemies.

It also results in realizing that despite the strength, knowledge, and vast abilities Allāh has given them, the Angels do not deserve to be worshipped. So if even the Angels are not to be worshipped, then those lesser than them are even less deserving of worship.

Belief in the Angels also affects a slave’s conduct by inspiring him to follow their example. Since the Angels are obedient to Allāh, we should also strive to be obedient. Additionally, belief in the Angels leads to fear of Allāh and vigilance in our deeds, knowing that Angels record our actions.

All of these are fruits of belief in the Angels.

Nullifiers of Belief in the Angels

The First Nullifier: To believe in some of them and reject others, as the Jews did, for they believed in some Angels and disbelieved in others. Allāh the Most High says:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

﴿مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“Say: Whoever is an enemy to Jibrīl—it is he who has brought it (the Qur’ān) down upon your heart by Allāh’s permission, confirming that which was before it and a guidance and glad tidings for the believers.”

[Sūrah al-Baqarah: 97]

And He says:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ

﴿عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“Whoever is an enemy to Allāh, His Angels, His Messengers, Jibrīl, and Mikā’īl—then indeed Allāh is an enemy to the disbelievers.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 98]

The Second Nullifier: To believe that the Angels are the daughters of Allāh, as some Arab polytheists used to believe. Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿ أَفَأَصْفَكَ رَبُّكَ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنثًا إِنَّكُمْ لَتَقُولُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

“Has your Lord then preferred you with sons and taken for Himself Angels as daughters? Truly, you say a dreadful saying.” [Sūrah al-Isrā': 40]

And He says:

﴿ وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنثًا أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ

سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيُسْتَأْذَنُ ﴾

“And they have made the Angels, who are slaves of the Most Merciful, females. Did they witness their creation? Their testimony will be recorded, and they will be questioned.” [Sūrah az-Zukhruf: 19]

Question: Are the Angels male or female?

Answer: The Angels are slaves of Allāh. We do not describe them as male or female. Instead, we say as our Lord says:

﴿ وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهُ ۚ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴾

“And they say: The Most Merciful has taken a son. Glorified is He! Rather, they are honored slaves.” [Sūrah al-Anbiyā': 26]

The Third Nullifier: To believe that the Angels deserve any act of worship. Whoever believes that the Angels deserve any part of worship has nullified his belief in the Angels. Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿ وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّنَ أَرْبَابًا أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ

بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

“And He would never command you to take the Angels and the prophets as lords. Would He command you with disbelief after you have submitted?” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān: 80]

So believing that they deserve anything from worship has been labeled by Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ as disbelief.

The Fourth Nullifier: To believe that the Angels possess unrestricted knowledge of the unseen (al-ghayb al-muṭlaq), which contradicts the statement of Allāh the Most High:

﴿ قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴾

“Say: None in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allāh. And they do not perceive when they will be resurrected.” [Sūrah an-Naml: 65]

No one knows the unseen completely except our Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

And how could they know the unseen when our Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

﴿ بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾

“And He taught Adam the names—all of them. Then He presented them to the Angels and said, ‘Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful.’” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 31]

The Angels responded:

﴿ سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾

“Glory be to You! We do not know what You have taught us. Indeed, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 32]

This proves that they do not know the unseen.

The Fifth Nullifier: To belittle or mock the Angels. Whoever belittles, mocks, or looks down upon the Angels has nullified his belief in them. Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَائِيلَ

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“Whoever is an enemy to Allāh, His Angels, His Messengers, Jibrīl, and Mikā’īl—then indeed Allāh is an enemy to the disbelievers.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 98]

Lesson 8: Belief in the Books

The Books we must believe in contain the Speech of Allāh, which He revealed to His Messengers. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ

ثُمَّ يَحْرِفُونَ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

“Do you covet [the hope] that they will believe in you, while a party of them used to hear the Word of Allāh, then they used to distort it knowingly after they had understood it?” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 75]

This indicates that the Books which Allāh revealed to His Messengers included His Speech عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

How to believe in the Books:

Belief in the Books is of two kinds: general and detailed.

General belief in the Books: This is the minimum required for a person to be considered a believer. It involves believing, in general, in every Book that Allāh has revealed. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَقُلْ ءَامَنْتُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ ﴾

“Say [O Prophet]: ‘I believe in whatever Allāh has sent down of the Book.’” [Sūrah ash-Shūrā: 15]

The word “whatever” here is inclusive, meaning: I believe in everything Allāh has revealed of the Book. So whoever does not believe in

all the Books that Allāh ﷻ has revealed in general, is not a believer in the Books.

Detailed belief in the Books is divided into categories:

First category: Believing in the Books which Allāh ﷻ named explicitly. Every Book that Allāh ﷻ named, we must believe in it by name. Allāh named the Taurāt (Torah):

﴿ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ ﴾

“Verily, We did send down the Taurāt [to Mūsá], therein was guidance and light.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 44]

So we must believe that there is a Book which Allāh sent down called the Taurāt.

And also the Injīl (Gospel), as He says:

﴿ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنجِيلَ ﴾

“And We gave him the Injīl.” [Sūrah al-Ḥadīd: 27].

And the Zabūr (Psalms), as He says:

﴿ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ﴾

“And We gave Dāwūd the Zabūr.” [Sūrah an-Nisā': 163].

And the **Scrolls of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā**, as He says:

﴿ صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى ﴾

“The Scriptures of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā.” [Sūrah al-A'lā: 19].

Second category: We believe in the previous Books by affirming them—we affirm the Taurāt, Injīl, and Zabūr. As for the Qur’ān, we believe in it through affirmation and following.

Third category: The Qur’ān abrogated the rulings of the previous Books. Since the Qur’ān is the abrogator, we must follow it exclusively, not any other book.

Nullifiers of Belief in the Books:

First nullifier: Believing in some Books and disbelieving in others. Whoever believes in the Taurāt but does not believe in the Qur’ān is not a believer in the Books. And whoever believes in the Qur’ān but does not believe in the Taurāt and Injīl is not a believer in the Books. Instead, believing in all of the Books of Allāh ﷻ is obligatory. Allāh says:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا تُوْمِنُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا

وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ﴾

“And when it is said to them: ‘Believe in what Allāh has sent down,’ they say: ‘We believe in what was sent down to us.’ And they disbelieve what came after it, while the truth confirms what is with them.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 91].

Second nullifier: Turning away from ruling by the Book of Allāh, doubting its validity, or arrogantly rejecting it. Whoever turns away from the legislation of the Book of Allāh, doubts its suitability, or arrogantly refuses its ruling, has fallen into a nullifier of belief in the Books. This is like the condition of the hypocrites:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَىٰ الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ
يَصُدُّونَ عَنكَ صُدُودًا﴾

“And when it is said to them: ‘Come to what Allāh has sent down and to the Messenger,’ you see the hypocrites turn away from you with aversion.” [Sūrah an-Nisā’: 61]

And He ﷺ says:

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فِرْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
وَمَا أُولَٰئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“They say: ‘We believe in Allāh and the Messenger and we obey,’ but then a party of them turns away thereafter. Such are not believers.” [Sūrah an-Nūr: 47]

Third nullifier: Believing that the Qur’ān is distorted or incomplete. This is a denial of the word of Allāh ﷺ because He says:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Verily, We have sent down the Reminder [the Qur’ān], and surely, We will guard it [from corruption].” [Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 9]

And He said ﷺ:

﴿لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ﴾

“Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind it; [it is] a revelation from One Who is All-Wise, Worthy of all praise.” [Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 42]

So whoever believes that the Qurʾān is distorted or incomplete has committed a nullifier of belief in the Books.

Fourth nullifier: Believing that the Books contain created speech. This is an important matter: Whoever believes that the Books contain created speech has, in reality, not considered the Books revealed by Allāh. The Books we must believe in include the Speech of Allāh, and the Speech of Allāh is not created. The Speech of Allāh proceeds from Him, and whatever proceeds from Allāh is not created. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ spoke the Books truly and in reality.

I conclude with the special qualities with which Allāh distinguished the Qurʾān from the previous Books:

From these qualities:

The first quality is that the Qurʾān was revealed gradually by circumstances. The Qurʾān was not revealed all at once; instead, it was sent down in portions according to events. Allāh says:

﴿ وَقُرْآنًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَىٰ مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنزِيلًا ﴾

“And [it is] a Qurʾān which We have separated [by intervals] so that you might recite it to the people over a prolonged period. And We have sent it down progressively.” [Sūrah al-Isrāʾ: 106]

Whereas the previous Books were revealed all at once. Allāh says:

﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً ﴾

“And those who disbelieve say: ‘Why was the Qurʾān not sent down to him all at once?’”

Then Allāh replied:

﴿كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا﴾

“Thus [it is], we may strengthen your heart thereby. And we have spaced it distinctly.” [Sūrah al-Furqān: 32]

The second quality is that the Qur’ān is the Prophet’s everlasting miracle (May Allāh elevate his rank and grant him peace) until the Hour is established. The Qur’ān will remain until Allāh lifts it at the end of time. It is the enduring miracle of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and thus it is a proof against the worlds until the Day of Judgment. As Allāh says:

﴿تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا﴾

“Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion upon His slave that he may be a warner to the worlds.” [Sūrah al-Furqān: 1]. Meanwhile, the miracles of the other prophets have ended.

The third quality is that the Qur’ān has authority over the previous scriptures. It is a judge, a witness, and a confirmer over what came before it. As Allāh says:

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنْ

الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ﴾

“And We have sent down to you the Book in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and as a guardian over it.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 48]

And from its authority, it abrogates the previous Books. So only the Book of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ is to be acted upon.

The fourth quality is that the Qurʾān is protected from alteration and distortion. As Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ﴾

“Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind it; [it is] a revelation from One Who is All-Wise, Worthy of all praise.” [Sūrah Fuṣṣilat: 42]

Because the One Who guaranteed its preservation is Allāh Himself – Exalted is He. So if Allāh is the One preserving it, it will not be subject to alteration or corruption. As Allāh says:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Indeed, We have sent down the Reminder, and indeed, We will guard it.” [Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 9]

The previous scriptures were distorted because Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ assigned their preservation to the rabbis and monks. As He says:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْمَوْا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ﴾

“Verily, We did send down the Taurāt [to Mūsá], therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets who submitted [to Allāh] judged for those who were Jews, and so did the rabbis and the scholars by that with which they were entrusted of the Book of Allāh, and they were witnesses thereto.” [Sūrah al-Māʾidah: 44]

Lesson 9: Belief in the Messengers

Belief in the Messengers is the fourth pillar of the six pillars of faith. Whoever does not hold this belief is not considered a believer. The Messengers are those to whom a legislation was revealed to convey it.

How to Believe in the Messengers:

Belief in the Messengers is of two kinds: general and detailed.

The general belief is that the minimum required for someone to be considered a believer in the Messengers. It is to believe in every Messenger or Prophet in a general sense. The evidence is His statement عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمُ الْجُورَهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا﴾

“And those who believe in Allāh and His Messengers and make no distinction between them, He will give their rewards to them. And Allāh is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” [Sūrah an-Nisā³: 152]

The word “Messengers” here is a plural noun in a possessive construct, and such constructs imply generality. They believed in Allāh and all of His Messengers, which is the level that every slave must attain.

Detailed belief includes:

The first matter is the belief in every Messenger whom Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ has named. Every Messenger mentioned by name in the Qur’ān must be

believed explicitly in—the Messengers named in the Qur’ān total twenty-five.

As for the total number of Prophets, no one knows it except Allāh. No sound text from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ specifies a count for them. However, concerning the Messengers, an authentic ḥadīth states that their number is three hundred and fifteen.

The second is that the belief in Muḥammad ﷺ must be accompanied by affirmation and following. As for the other Messengers, belief in them requires affirmation only. Because with the coming of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the legislations of the previous Messengers were abrogated. Hence, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«لَوْ كَانَ مُوسَى حَيًّا مَا وَسَعَهُ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعِي»

“If Mūsá were alive, he would have had no choice but to follow me.”
[Reported by al-Baghawī in *Sharḥ as-Sunnah*].

And when ‘Īsá (Jesus, peace be upon him) returns at the end of time, he will rule according to the Shari‘ah of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

The third is the belief that every Messenger conveyed the message with which he was sent. All the Messengers fulfilled the duty of conveying what they were sent with from Allāh عزَّ وجلَّ.

This is a detailed belief, and it follows one’s knowledge. So, whenever a text from the Book of Allāh reaches you concerning the Messengers, you must believe in it in detail.

Nullifiers of Belief in the Messengers

First Nullifier: Believing in some Messengers while disbelieving in others. Whoever believes in some Messengers and disbelieves in others has

committed a nullifier of belief in the Messengers and thus becomes a disbeliever. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ
نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿١٥١﴾﴾

“Verily, those who disbelieve in Allāh and His Messengers and wish to distinguish between Allāh and 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 a humiliating punishment for the disbelievers.” [Sūrah an-Nisā’: 150–151]

So, whoever differentiates between the Messengers in terms of belief is a disbeliever.

Second Nullifier: Seeking judgement from anyone other than the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, whether out of aversion, arrogance, or doubt. Whoever refers judgment to someone other than the Messenger, turning away from his ruling, doubting its suitability, or arrogantly refusing it, has disbelieved. This is the state of the hypocrites:

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّى فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
وَمَا أُولَٰئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾

“They say: ‘We believe in Allāh and the Messenger and we obey,’ but then a party of them turns away thereafter. Such are not believers.” [Sūrah an-Nūr: 47]

Third Nullifier: Believing that the Messengers or Prophets possess any attribute of Lordship or Divinity. Anyone who believes that the

Messengers have control over the universe, can send down rain, or deserve to be worshipped alongside Allāh (Glorified is He) has nullified their belief in the Messengers.

Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“Surely, they have disbelieved who say that Allāh is the Messiah, son of Maryam. Say: Who then has any power against Allāh, if He were to destroy the Messiah, son of Maryam, his mother, and everyone on the earth together? To Allāh belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what is between them. He creates what He wills. And Allāh is Able to do all things.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 17]

Thus, Allāh judged with disbelief those who claimed that 'Īsá (Jesus) is Allāh; and He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمَّهُ وَامْرَأَةٌ صَادِقَةٌ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ أَنْظِرْ أَنِّي يُؤْفَكُونَ﴾

“The Messiah, son of Maryam, was no more than a Messenger. Many were the Messengers who passed away before him. His mother was a truthful woman. They both used to eat food. See how We make the signs clear to them, then see how they are deluded.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 75] Whoever eats food is in need, and thus is not worthy of worship.

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا إِنَّهُمْ لَيَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ
وَيَمْشُونَ فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ ﴾

“We did not send any Messengers before you, but they ate food and walked in the markets.” [Sūrah al-Furqān: 20]

Whoever is in such a state is not worthy of being worshipped, nor is capable of controlling the universe.

And Allāh commanded the Messengers to say:

﴿ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ ﴾

“I am only a man like you, to whom it has been revealed that your God is only One God.” [Sūrah al-Kahf: 110]

So they are human beings whom Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ honored with revelation.

Fourth Nullifier: Believing that the Messengers have knowledge of the unseen (absolute ghayb). This contradicts the statement of Allāh (Glorified is He):

﴿ قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴾

“Say: None in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allāh; nor can they perceive when they will be resurrected.” [Sūrah an-Naml: 65]

And His statement:

﴿ قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ
لَأَسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

“Say [O Prophet]: I do not possess any benefit or harm for myself, except as Allāh wills. If I knew the unseen, I should have secured an abundance of wealth for myself, and no evil would have touched me. I am but a warner and a bringer of glad tidings to people who believe.” [Sūrah al-Aʿrāf: 188]

This indicates that the Prophets do not know the unseen. Whoever believes they do has nullified their belief in the Messengers.

Fifth Nullifier: Belittling, mocking, or insulting the Messengers. Whoever insults or belittles the Messengers has committed a nullifier of belief in them.

Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ
لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴾

“Verily, those who offend Allāh and His Messenger – Allāh has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating punishment.” [Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 57]

Distinct Characteristics of the Messengers

The Messengers are distinguished from other human beings by certain unique characteristics, including:

First: Revelation through Jibrīl (Gabriel). Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ﴾

“Say: I am only a man like you, to whom it has been revealed that your God is One God.” [Sūrah al-Kahf: 110] So, he is human, but distinguished by the divine revelation.

Second: Infallibility – Allāh protected them from error in what they conveyed from Him. They cannot err in what they transmit from Allāh. Allāh عزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ﴾

“He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allāh.” [Sūrah an-Nisā’: 80]

Allāh made obedience to the Messenger obligatory, and had he not been infallible, obedience to him would not have been mandatory.

Third: Their eyes sleep, but their hearts do not. As reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

«يَا عَائِشَةُ، إِنَّ عَيْنِي تَنَامَانِ وَلَا يَنَامُ قَلْبِي»

“O ‘Ā’ishah, my eyes sleep, but my heart does not.”

And in another narration:

«وكَذَلِكَ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ تَنَامُ أَعْيُنُهُمْ وَلَا تَنَامُ قُلُوبُهُمْ»

“Likewise, the Prophets: their eyes sleep but their hearts do not.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī]

Fourth: The earth does not consume their bodies; they are buried where they die. As narrated in the ḥadīth, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَجْسَادَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ»

“Verily, Allāh has forbidden the earth from consuming the bodies of the Prophets.” [Reported by Abū Dāwūd]

Thus, the earth cannot consume the bodies of the Prophets; instead, they remain intact. They are also buried where they pass away. As the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

«مَا قَبَضَ اللَّهُ نَبِيًّا إِلَّا فِي الْمَوْطِنِ الَّذِي يُحِبُّ أَنْ يُدْفَنَ فِيهِ»

“No Prophet dies except that he is buried where he dies.” [Reported by at-Tirmidhī]

Hence, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was buried in the house of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا because he passed away there—May Allāh be pleased with her.

Fifth: They are alive in their graves and pray. As stated in the ḥadīth, the Prophet (May Allāh elevate his rank and grant him peace) said:

«الْأَنْبِيَاءُ أَحْيَاءٌ فِي قُبُورِهِمْ يُصَلُّونَ»

“The Prophets are alive in their graves, praying.” [Reported by Abū Ya’lā]

This is a Barzakhī (intermediate) life, unlike our worldly life. It is an unseen form of life; therefore, requesting anything from them is not permissible.

Distinct Characteristics of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Our Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was distinguished from other Messengers by specific traits, including:

First: He is the best of the Prophets. No Prophet is superior to our Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Allāh preferred some Messengers over others, as He says:

﴿ تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ﴾

“Those Messengers! We preferred some of them over others.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 253]

The evidence that he is the best of the Prophets – may Allāh’s blessings and peace be upon him – is his saying:

«أَنَا سَيِّدُ وُلْدِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

“I am the leader of the children of Ādam on the Day of Resurrection.”
[Reported by Muslim]

He is their leader and the most beloved of creation to Allāh عَزَّجَلَّ.

Second: Allāh عَزَّجَلَّ sent him to both jinn and mankind, as Allāh عَزَّجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ

النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

“And We have not sent you except to all mankind as a bringer of glad tidings and a warner, but most men do not know.” [Sūrah Saba’: 28]

And He عَزَّجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا

أَنْصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا

كِتَابًا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ
 وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ يَنْقُومَنَّا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ، يَعْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِنْ
 ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِزَّكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَمَنْ لَا يُجِبْ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ
 فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءُ أُولَئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

“And [mention] when We directed to you a group of the jinn, listening to the Qur’ān. When they attended it, they said: ‘Listen quietly.’ And when it was concluded, they returned to their people as warners. They said: ‘O our people! Verily, we have heard a Book sent down after Mūsá, confirming what was before it. It guides to the truth and to a straight path. Oh, our people! Please respond to the caller of Allāh and believe in him. He will forgive you your sins and protect you from a painful punishment. And whoever does not respond to the caller of Allāh will not escape [His punishment] on earth, and he will have no protectors besides Him. Those are in manifest error:” [Sūrah al-Aḥqāf: 29–32]

As for other Prophets, they were explicitly sent to their nations.

Third: Allāh granted him the most extraordinary intercession (ash-shafā’ah al-‘uzmā) on the Day of Resurrection. Allāh says:

﴿عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَحْمُودًا﴾

“It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praised station.” [Sūrah al-Isrā’: 79] This “praised station” is the intercession.

Fourth: He was granted Jawāmi‘ al-Kalim (concise speech with comprehensive meaning). He would say a few words that held vast meanings. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

«فُضِّلْتُ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ بِسِتِّ، وَذَكَرَ مِنْهَا: أَنَّهُ أُعْطِيَ جَوَامِعَ الْكَلِمِ»

“I was given superiority over the Prophets with six things,” and among them: “I was given concise, comprehensive speech.” [Reported by Muslim]

Fifth: Allāh sealed Prophethood with him – there is no Prophet after the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Allāh says:

﴿مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ

اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا﴾

“Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of the Prophets. And Allāh is Ever All-Knowing of everything.” [Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 40]

Therefore, after our Prophet, there will be no Prophet.

Lesson 10: Belief in the Last Day

The Last Day refers to everything that happens after death. It is called “the Last Day” because there is no day after it. Numerous names have been given to it in the Qur’ān and Sunnah: the Last Day, the Day of Resurrection, the Day of Calling, the Day of Mutual Loss and Gain, the Overwhelming Event, the Inevitable, the Striking Calamity, the Deafening Blast, and others. The variety of names indicates its immense importance.

Every Muslim needs to know the details of this Day to fear its horrors and be driven to obey the commands of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ and avoid His prohibitions. One must not be like those about whom Allāh says:

﴿ وَقِيلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا وَمَأْوَأَكُمْ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴾

“And it will be said: This Day We will forget you as you forgot the meeting of this Day of yours, and your abode is the Fire, and there will be no helpers for you.” [Sūrah al-Jāthiyah: 34]

So, Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ warned against being heedless of this Day, emphasizing that He will abandon those who neglect it.

How to Believe in the Last Day

Belief in the Last Day is of two types: general and detailed.

General belief: To believe that there is a Day on which Allāh will resurrect the creation and judge them for their deeds.

Detailed belief: This includes faith in the Barzakh life and the Hereafter.

The Barzakh Life

This is the life between this world and the Hereafter. It begins with death and ends with resurrection. When a person dies, his Barzakh life begins, and when he is resurrected, that life ends, transitioning into the next.

Included in the Barzakh life are:

The Trial of the Grave: This is the interrogation and test that occurs in the grave. No trial is greater than this, as this test determines whether the person will live in bliss or punishment. In a *ṣaḥīḥ* ḥadīth, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«إذا قُبر الميت أتاه ملكان أسودان أزرقان يُقال لأحدهما: المنكر، والآخر: النكير،
فيسألانه...»

“Two black and blue Angels come to him when the deceased is buried. One is called Munkar, and the other Nakīr. They ask him...” [Reported by at-Tirmidhī].

So when a person dies, his trial begins. Two black and blue Angels approach him, seat him, and ask: Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?

Some people assume these questions are easy for everyone. But it is not so. Only those whom Allāh grants success and who are people of faith will answer correctly. As for the believer, he says, “My Lord is Allāh, my religion is Islām, and my Prophet is Muḥammad (May Allāh elevate his rank and grant him peace).”

As for the disbeliever, he says: “Hah, hah, I do not know. I heard people saying something and I said the same.” It is a great trial. Even the Prophet ﷺ used to seek refuge from it.

The Bliss or Punishment of the Grave refers to the comfort or torment experienced during Barzakh life.

Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٥٥﴾ النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٥٦﴾﴾

“The Fire; they are exposed to it morning and evening. And on the Day the Hour will be established [it will be said]: ‘Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment.’” [Sūrah Ghāfir: 45–46]

So, the people of Pharaoh are shown the Fire before the Hour, meaning during the Barzakh life. Also, in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed by two graves and said:

«إِنَّهُمَا لَيُعَذَّبَانِ وَمَا يُعَذَّبَانِ فِي كَبِيرٍ»

“Indeed, they are being punished and not being punished for something major.”

This affirms that punishment occurs in the grave. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

«لَوْلَا أَلَّا تَدَافِنُوا لَدَعَوَاتِ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُسْمِعَكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ الَّذِي أَسْمَعُ»

“Were it not that you would stop burying one another, I would have supplicated to Allāh to let you hear the punishment of the grave that I hear.”

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to seek refuge from the punishment of the grave after every prayer.

There is also bliss in the grave. The souls of the martyrs are in green birds, enjoying comfort. Masrūq said: We asked ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd about the Āyah:

«وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا، بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزُقُونَ»، قَالَ: «أَمَّا إِنَّا
 قَدْ سَأَلْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ»، فَقَالَ: «أُرْوَاهُمْ فِي جَوْفِ طَيْرٍ خُضِرَ، لَهَا قَنَادِيلٌ معلقةٌ بِالْعَرْشِ،
 تَسْرُحُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ شَاءَتْ، ثُمَّ تَأْوِي إِلَى تِلْكَ الْقَنَادِيلِ»

“Do not think of those who are killed in the path of Allāh as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision.” He said: “We asked the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about that, and he said: “Their souls are in the insides of green birds, which have lanterns hanging from the Throne. They roam in Paradise as they wish and then return to these lanterns.” [Reported by Muslim]

The consensus of the Ummah affirms the reality of both bliss and punishment in the grave.

The Blowing of the Trumpet

The Trumpet (ṣūr) is a horn that will be blown into. The one who blows it is Isrāfil, which consensus has affirmed. He is waiting for permission from Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ to blow into it.

When He gives permission and Isrāfil blows the Trumpet, everyone in the heavens and earth will fall unconscious, as Allāh says:

﴿ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَبَقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
 ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَى فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴾

“And the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and on the earth will swoon away, except whom Allāh wills. Then it will be blown again, and they will be standing, looking on.” [Sūrah az-Zumar: 68]

There are two blasts:

- The first blast: the blast of terror and unconsciousness.
- The second blast: the blast of resurrection.

The first blast occurs during Barzakh life. When Isrāfil blows the first blast, everyone in the heavens and the earth will be terrified, except for whom Allāh wills, and then they will fall unconscious. This marks the end of Barzakh life. Then comes the second blast, and people will be resurrected from their graves.

Resurrection (al-Ba‘th)

Resurrection is the revival of the dead and their emergence from the graves. Allāh says:

﴿رَعِمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُبْعَثُوا قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤَنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ

وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿﴾

“Those who disbelieve claim that they will never be resurrected. Say: Yes, by my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed of what you did. And that is easy for Allāh.” [Sūrah at-Taghābun: 7]

People will be resurrected in the state they were in this world. Whoever lived upon something will die upon it, and whoever died upon something will be resurrected upon it.

So, the one who lived for music, songs, and TV shows and died in that state will be resurrected in that state. Thus, it is up to a person to fear Allāh and turn toward His obedience, allowing for their life to be filled with devotion and acts of worship, so that when death comes to them, it finds them obedient to Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ and they will be resurrected in that condition.

After the resurrection comes the gathering, the gathering (ḥaṣhr) is the assembly of creation and the driving of them to the land of gathering. As for the disbelievers, they will be gathered on their faces:

﴿وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمِيَآ وَبُكْمًا وَصُمًّا مَّا أُولَئِكَ جَهَنَّمَ

كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيرًا﴾

“And We shall gather them together on the Day of Resurrection on their faces—blind, dumb, and deaf. Their abode will be Hell; every time it subsides, We shall increase the fierceness of the Fire for them.” [Sūrah al-Isrā': 97]

We seek refuge with Allāh from disgrace. And as for the people of faith, they will be gathered in honor:

﴿يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ وَفَدًا﴾

“On the Day when We shall gather the Muttaqūn (the pious) to the Most Gracious (Allāh) like a delegation.” [Sūrah Maryam: 85]

So glad tidings to the faithful. Where will they gather? They will gather in the land of gathering, which is a land different from ours:

﴿يَوْمَ تَبْدُلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ﴾

“On the Day when the earth will be changed to another earth and so will be the heavens, and they will appear before Allāh, the One, the Irresistible.” [Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 48]

It is white with a reddish tint, spacious—the plain of the Day of Resurrection. There will be no sign on it, and mankind will be gathered upon it. As an honor from Allāh to the people of faith, this land will be like a loaf of bread from which they eat. This is specific to the people of faith.

Beasts and cattle will also be gathered. Allāh the Most High says:

﴿وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ﴾

“And when the wild beasts are gathered together.” [Sūrah at-Takwīr: 5]

So all of creation will be gathered to the land of gathering. When the people gather on this land, the stars will be folded up, and the mountains will be demolished. That day will be severe upon the people due to its length and the enormity of its terrors. So they will seek intercession, going to Ādam, who will excuse himself, saying:

«نَفْسِي نَفْسِي، لَقَدْ غَضِبَ الرَّبُّ الْيَوْمَ غَضَبًا لَمْ يَغْضَبْ قَبْلَهُ مِثْلَهُ»، ثُمَّ يَذْهَبُونَ إِلَى نُوحٍ، ثُمَّ يَذْهَبُونَ إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ، ثُمَّ إِلَى مُوسَى، ثُمَّ إِلَى عِيسَى، فَكُلُّهُمْ يَعْتَذِرُ. ثُمَّ يَذْهَبُونَ إِلَى حَبِيبِنَا وَشَفِيعِنَا (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) فَيَقُولُ: «أَنَا لَهَا» فَيَسْجُدُ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ، وَيَحْمَدُ اللَّهَ -جَلَّ وَعَلَا- بِمَحَامِدَ لَا يُحْسِنُهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: «ارْفَعْ رَأْسَكَ، وَسَلْ تُعْطَهُ، وَاشْفَعْ تُشْفَعِ»

“Myself, myself. Indeed, my Lord is angry today with an anger He has never had before.” Then they will go to Nūḥ, then to Ibrāhīm, then to Mūsá, then to ʿĪsá; and all of them will excuse themselves. Then they will go to our beloved and intercessor صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and he will say: “This is for me (i.e., for me to carry out).” He will prostrate beneath the Throne and praise Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ with praises he does not know in this world. Then it will be said to him: “Raise your head, ask and you will be given, intercede and your intercession will be accepted.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

So he will intercede for all creation so that Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ will hasten their reckoning. This is the Greatest Intercession, for which the first and the last will envy him صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

After that, the records will be spread and distributed. These are the scrolls in which the deeds of the children of Ādam are recorded.

Some will take their record in their right hand, and some will take it in their left hand from behind their back.

The believer will take his book in his right hand and rejoice, saying:

﴿ هَآؤُمْ أَقْرَأُوا كِتَابِيَةَ ﴿١١﴾ إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلَاقٍ حِسَابِيَةَ ﴾

“Here! Read my record! Surely, I did believe that I shall meet my account!” [Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah: 19–20]

And his reward will be:

﴿ فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ﴿١١﴾ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿١٢﴾ فُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾ كُلُوا وَشَرِبُوا

﴿ هِنَبًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴾

“So he shall be in a life well-pleasing, in a lofty Paradise, the fruits in bunches whereof will be low and near at hand. Eat and drink at ease for what you have sent before you in days past!” [Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah: 21–24]

As for the disbeliever, he will take his record in his left hand from behind his back, and he will say:

﴿ يَلَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُوْتِ كِتَابِيَةَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَةَ ﴿٢٦﴾ يَلَيْتَنِي مَا كَانَتِ الْقَاضِيَةَ ﴿٢٧﴾ مَا أُعْزَى

﴿ عَنِّي مَالِيَةَ ﴿٢٨﴾ هَلْكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَةَ ﴾

“Woe to me! Would that I had not been given my record! And that I had never known how my account was! Would that it had been my end! My wealth has not availed me, my power and arguments have gone from me!” [Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah: 25–29]

And his recompense will be:

﴿ خُذُوهُ فَعَلُوهُ ﴿٣٠﴾ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ﴿٣١﴾ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ﴾

“Seize and fetter him; then throw him in the blazing Fire. Then fasten him with a chain whose length is seventy cubits.” [Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah: 30–32] Until the end of the Āyāt.

After the records are spread, comes the reckoning. The reckoning is their being made to stand before their deeds so that they may be recompensed accordingly.

The reckoning is of two types:

- A light reckoning, which is the presentation.
- A difficult reckoning, which is interrogation and debate.

As for the light reckoning, it is when the believer’s sins are presented to him and his Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ will say to him after drawing him near in private:

«أَلَمْ تَفْعَلْ يَوْمَ كَذَا ذَنْبَ كَذَا؟ أَلَمْ تَفْعَلْ يَوْمَ كَذَا ذَنْبَ كَذَا؟ فَيَقُولُ: أَيُّ رَبِّ، هَلَكْتُ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ-جَلَّ وَعَلَا-: إِنِّي سَتَرْتُهَا عَلَيْكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنِّي أَعْفِرُهَا لَكَ الْيَوْمَ»

“Did you not commit such-and-such sin on such-and-such day? Did you not commit such-and-such sin on such-and-such day?” So he will say: **“Yes, my Lord, I am ruined.”** Then Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ will say: **“I concealed it for you in the world, and I forgive it for you today.”** [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

A Lord who is Forgiving and Merciful, concealing the sins of His slaves. Thus, the believer’s sins are shown to him, then forgiven. That is the presentation.

The challenging reckoning occurs when a person must stand up for their sins, face disgrace before creation, and be punished for them without forgiveness.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ نُوقِشَ الْحِسَابَ يَهْلِكُ»

“Whoever is interrogated about his reckoning will be ruined.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī]

After the reckoning comes the weighing of deeds. Allāh عزَّوجلَّ will place the scale.

The scale is the device with which things are weighed and has two pans. Deeds and records will be weighed, and even the person himself may be weighed. Through the weighing of deeds, the justice of Allāh عزَّوجلَّ is made manifest, and Allāh does not wrong anyone:

﴿وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَمَنْ

خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظَاهُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾

“And the weighing on that Day will be the true (weighing). So, those whose scale (of good deeds) will be heavy will succeed. And those whose scale (of good deeds) will be light will lose themselves because they denied Our revelations.” [Sūrah al-A‘rāf: 8–9]

After the weighing, there is a ḥawḍ (cistern). It is the reservoir of water Allāh عزَّوجلَّ has set up on the Day of Judgment for His Prophet ﷺ.

This cistern: its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Its vessels are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks from it once will never experience thirst again.

It is a great cistern from which only the people of faith drink. The apostates and the innovators will be turned away from it; they will not drink from the cistern of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

After the cistern is the ṣirāṭ (bridge), it is the bridge over Hell. Whoever crosses it is saved, and whoever does not is from the people of the Fire.

People will cross it in accordance with their deeds: some will pass like the wind, others like lightning, some like mounted horses, and some will crawl.

Around it are hooks and clamps that snatch those commanded to snatch and cast them into the Fire of Hell.

Allāh will grant the faithful light, which they will follow across the bridge. Those on the bridge will either be saved or cast into Hell.

Among the saved are those who are entirely safe and those who are scratched yet ultimately saved. After the bridge, they will stand upon the Qanṭarah—a bridge between the ṣirāṭ and Paradise. They will be purified, and no grudge or envy will remain in their hearts, as Allāh says:

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ﴾

“And We shall remove from their breasts any (mutual) hatred or sense of injury (which they had), (they will be) brothers facing each other on thrones.” [Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 47]

Whoever crosses the Qanṭarah enters Paradise, and whoever falls from the bridge is in the Fire.

Paradise is the abode that Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ has prepared for His allies. It is that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and that which has not crossed the heart of any human.

The most incredible bliss in Paradise is seeing Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

﴿وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ﴾

“Some faces that Day shall be radiant, looking at their Lord.” [Sūrah al-Qiyāmah: 22–23]

No one enters Paradise except His allies—those who passed the *ṣirāt*.

The Fire is the abode that Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ has prepared for His enemies.

And the belief of Ahl as-Sunnah wa-al-Jamā‘ah regarding Paradise and the Fire is that they are both created and presently existing, as He says about Paradise:

﴿ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ
أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

“And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for the Muttaqūn (the pious).” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān: 133]

And He said about the Fire:

﴿ وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴾

“And fear the Fire which is prepared for the disbelievers.” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān: 131] Meaning: it has been completed and prepared.

They will neither perish nor cease to exist. The people of Paradise will remain therein forever, and the people of the Fire will remain therein forever. Allāh says about Paradise:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا أَبَدًا لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴾

“But those who believe and do righteous good deeds, We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. Therein they shall have purified mates, and We shall admit them to shades wide and ever deepening.” [Sūrah an-Nisāʾ: 57]

And He says:

﴿لَا مَقْطُوعَةَ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةَ﴾

“Neither interrupted nor forbidden.” [Sūrah al-Wāqīʿah: 33]

And He says:

﴿وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ﴾

“And they will never get out of the Fire.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 167]

We move to an important issue: the nullifiers of belief in the Last Day. The first nullifier: Denying or rejecting it, as the disbelievers and materialists do. They deny the Last Day. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿وَيَلُومُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٥﴾ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا يَكْذِبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ

﴿مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ﴾

“Woe that Day to the deniers who deny the Day of Recompense. And none denies it except every sinful transgressor.” [Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn: 10-12]

So Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ threatened them with woe; and He says:

﴿وَقِيلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنْسَأَكُمُ كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا وَمَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن تَنْصِرِينَ﴾

“This Day We will forget you as you forgot the meeting of this Day of yours, and your abode is the Fire, and you will have no helpers.” [Sūrah al-Jāthiyah: 34]

So whoever forgets the meeting with Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ, Allāh will abandon and punish him.

The second nullifier: Interpreting away the Last Day and what occurs therein.

Whoever interprets the Last Day away has fallen into a nullifier of belief in the Last Day, similar to one who says: “The scale is symbolic of justice, and there is no actual scale,” or: “The bridge is metaphorical, and there is no real bridge.”

All of this stems from the nullifiers. Some nullifiers refer back to the foundational belief in the Last Day, while others pertain to the obligatory standard of perfect belief in the Last Day.

Lesson 11: Belief in Divine Decree (al-Qadar)

Al-Qadar (Divine Decree): It is the determination of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ for all created things, according to His eternal knowledge and the demands of His wisdom.

Belief in al-Qadar is either general or detailed.

- General belief: is that you believe that everything is by Divine Decree, and that the One who decreed it is Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ alone.
- Detailed belief: consists of everything that has come in the texts in a detailed manner concerning al-Qadar.

This includes matters related to guidance and misguidance, wisdom, causes and their non-contradiction with the Decree—all of this is part of detailed belief.

Belief in Divine Decree is founded on levels regarded as its pillars. Anyone who does not establish them is not considered a believer in Divine Decree. These levels are:

1. Knowledge
2. Writing
3. Will
4. Creation

First Level - Knowledge: What is meant by it is the eternal knowledge of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ that encompasses everything, as He says:

﴿وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾

“He has encompassed everything in knowledge.” [Sūrah ṬāHā: 98]

So He knows what was in the past, what will be in the future, and what has not occurred—how it would be if it were to happen. That which is non-existent is known to Him if it were decreed to exist, as He says:

﴿ إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الضُّمُّ الْأَبْكُمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴾ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَلَوْ عَلِمَ

اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

“Verily, the worst of moving creatures with Allāh are the deaf and the dumb, those who do not understand. Had Allāh known any good in them, He would indeed have made them hear, and even if He had made them hear, they would still have turned away, with aversion.” [Sūrah al-Anfāl: 22–23]

Nothing can occur contrary to the Decree, because the Decree is connected to the eternal knowledge of Allāh, and nothing is hidden from Allāh.

Second Level - Writing: It is what has been written in the Preserved Tablet (al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz). Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ created the pen and commanded it to write everything that will occur until the Day of Resurrection in the Preserved Tablet.

The One who commanded the writing is Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

What has been written in the Preserved Tablet cannot be changed or altered because it corresponds to the eternal knowledge. What Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ knew eternally to occur until the Day of Resurrection, He commanded to be written in the Preserved Tablet. The evidence for the writing is His statement:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَءِثْرَهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ ﴾

﴿ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴾

“Verily, We give life to the dead, and We record that which they send before them and their traces; and all things We have recorded with a clear Book.” [Sūrah YāSīn: 12]

There are two types of writing:

1. Writing in the Preserved Tablet
2. Writing in the scrolls of the Angels

What is written in the Preserved Tablet does not change or alter, but what is written in the scrolls of the Angels may be subject to change and replacement.

Third Level – Will: It refers to His universal will عَزَّجَلَّ so everything in existence is by the will of Allāh. What He wills happens, and what He does not will does not occur.

As for the will of the slave, it is subordinate to the will of Allāh and falls under His will عَزَّجَلَّ. He عَزَّجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ﴾

“And you will not, unless Allāh wills.” [Sūrah al-Insān: 30]

Fourth Level – Creation: Allāh عَزَّجَلَّ is the sole Creator. Allāh is the Creator, and everything besides Him is created. Allāh عَزَّجَلَّ says:

﴿ اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ﴾

“Allāh is the Creator of all things.” [Sūrah az-Zumar: 62]

The slave and his actions are part of the creation of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Allāh is the One who created the slave and his actions. Someone may ask: How is it that Allāh created the action of the slave, while that action is attributed to the slave?

It is said: Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ created the will and the ability in the slave. The slave's actions occur through his will and ability. Since Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ created the will and the ability, He is also the Creator of what results from that will and ability.

So it is Allāh who gave the slave will and ability, and what results from that will and ability is created by Allāh.

Nothing falls outside the creation of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Now we move to an important issue:

The Nullifiers of Belief in Divine Decree.

First Nullifier: Believing that Allāh compelled the slaves to perform their actions. Whoever believes that the slave has no ability and no action, and that Allāh forced him to act—such a person has nullified their belief in Divine Decree.

The slave has ability and will. He is the one who acts, and the action is attributed to him.

To illustrate this with an example: when the slave prays, the prayer is attributed to him because he directly performed the action. However, the One who created the slave and his prayer is Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

So the action is attributed to the slave because he directly performed it, and it is attributed to Allāh in terms of creation, so it is said: Allāh created the slave and his prayer.

As for the Jabriyyah, they say: Allāh is the one who prays, because He compelled the slave to perform the action. These are the Jabriyyah.

Second Nullifier: Believing that the slave creates his own actions. Anyone who believes that the slave creates his own actions, such as prayer, is a nullifier of belief in Divine Decree, for the One who creates is Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ. There is no Creator except Allāh.

Lesson 12: Matters Attached to the Six Pillars of Īmān

These pertain to the supplements of the six pillars of Īmān. The scholars of creed discussed them because those who opposed these issues are considered the people of innovation. Therefore, when their opposition to Ahl as-Sunnah became widely recognized, Ahl as-Sunnah included these matters in the chapter of creed, appending them to the six pillars of Īmān.

Lesson 13: The Term “Īmān” (True Islāmīc Faith)

The term “Īmān,” according to Ahl as-Sunnah, encompasses several matters. Among these matters are:

1. Īmān includes both statements and actions.
2. Īmān increases and decreases.
3. The permissibility of saying “I am a believer, if Allāh wills.”

First Issue: Īmān is both Statement and Action. According to Ahl as-Sunnah wa-al-Jamā‘ah, Īmān refers to both statement and action. This means the statement of the heart, belief, and the statement of the tongue are all called Īmān. Furthermore, the action of the heart and the action of the limbs are also termed Īmān. Thus, Īmān encompasses every statement and action.

The Shari‘ah supports this, for “Īmān” is a legislative term, and it is only derived from the Qur’ān and Sunnah. The texts of the Qur’ān and Sunnah indicate that Īmān is both statement and action:

Evidence that the statement of the heart is included in the definition of Īmān: The statement of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا ﴾

“Only those are the believers who have believed in Allāh and His Messenger and afterward doubt not.” [Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 15]

He made Īmān conditional upon the absence of doubt, and the place of doubt is the heart. This indicates that the intended meaning of Īmān here is the statement of the heart.

As for the statement of the tongue, the evidence is: Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ قُولُوا ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نَفَرُّ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴾

“Say: We believe in Allāh and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrāhīm, Ismā‘īl, Ishāq, Ya‘qūb and to the offspring of the twelve sons of Ya‘qūb, and that which has been given to Mūsá and ‘Īsá, and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islām).” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 136]

He applied Islām to His statement: **“Say: We believe in Allāh,”** making them Muslims because they said: *We believe in Allāh*. The meaning of “saying” here is the statement of the tongue. This indicates that the statement of the tongue is included in the definition of Īmān.

As for the action of the heart, the evidence is: The statement of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴾

“The believers are only those who, when Allāh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Āyāt are recited unto them, they increase

their faith; and put their trust in their Lord. Who perform the prayer and spend out of what We have provided for them.” [Sūrah al-Anfāl: 2-4] Fear (wajal) is an action of the heart, and He called it Īmān.

As for the action of the limbs, the evidence is: The statement of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَنَكُمْ﴾

“And Allāh would never cause your Īmān to be lost.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 143]

By consensus of the scholars, what is meant by Īmān here is: prayer, as they used to pray facing Bayt al-Maqdis, and then the direction of prayer was abrogated. So Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَنَكُمْ﴾

“And Allāh would never cause your Īmān to be lost,” meaning: your prayer. These four matters are collectively included in the statement of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the authentic narration:

«الإيمانُ بضعٌ وسبعونَ شعبةً—أو بضعٌ وستونَ—شعبةً: أعلاها قول (لا إله إلا الله)،

وأدناها إماطة الأذى عن الطريق، والحياء شعبةٌ من شعب الإيمان»

“Īmān has over seventy branches—or over sixty branches—the highest of which is the statement: ‘Lā ilāha illa Allāh’ (There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh), and the lowest of which is removing something harmful from the path. And modesty is a branch of Īmān.” [Reported by Muslim]

The statement *“Lā ilāha illa Allāh”* includes the statement of the heart—i.e., belief in *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*—and consists of the statement of the tongue—i.e., pronouncing it.

His statement, “**And the lowest is removing something harmful from the path,**” is an action of the limbs. His statement, “**And modesty is a branch of Īmān,**” is an action of the heart. Therefore, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ —the truthful, the one believed—made Īmān consist of branches and components. Thus, from the components of Īmān is the statement, and from its components is action.

Second Issue: Īmān increases and decreases. Īmān increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience. If a person performs acts of obedience, his Īmān increases, and if he sins, his Īmān decreases in proportion to the sin he committed.

Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدَّ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَآخَشَوْهُمْ فزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا﴾

“**Those to whom the people said: Verily, the people have gathered against you, so fear them. But it only increased them in faith.**” [Sūrah Āli ‘Imrān: 173]

And He says:

﴿ويزداد الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِيمَانًا﴾

“**That the believers may increase in faith.**” [Sūrah al-Muddaththir: 31]

Likewise, it decreases with disobedience, as the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

﴿مَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْ نَاقِصَاتِ عَقْلِ وَدِينٍ أَذْهَبَ لِيَدِي لُبًّا مِنْ إِحْدَاكُنَّ﴾

“**I have not seen anyone more deficient in intellect and religion who can take away the mind of a resolute man than one of you (women).**” [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

Then he explained the deficiency in religion as being that when she menstruates, she does not pray.

This indicates that Īmān may decrease. It may decrease due to disobedience or not performing an act of obedience if someone is excused.

For example, we have two women—one menstruating and one not. The woman who is not menstruating will pray all the prayers, while the woman who is menstruating will not pray. Compared to the one who is praying, the one who is menstruating has less Īmān, even though she is excused and not sinful.

Third Issue: The permissibility of saying “I am a believer, if Allāh wills.” Meaning: It is permissible to say: “I am a believer, if Allāh wills,” or “I am a believer, I hope.” But what is meant by Īmān in this context is: complete Īmān.

Meaning: fulfilling all commands and abandoning all prohibitions, since Īmān is composed of parts and branches.

Undoubtedly, no one can claim he has fulfilled all the obligations and abandoned all the prohibitions. So, if what is intended by Īmān is complete Īmān, then it is permissible for one to make an exception; in fact, it may be obligatory.

Likewise, if he intends by Īmān: acceptance by Allāh, and he does not know whether his Īmān has been accepted or not, then he may make an exception, because Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

“Verily, Allāh accepts only from those who have Taqwá.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 27]

It is also permissible for one to make an exception in Īmān out of fear of self-praise, as Allāh says:

﴿فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى﴾

“So do not claim yourselves to be pure. He knows best who fears Him.”

[Sūrah an-Najm: 32]

This is based on the understanding that the intended meaning of Īmān is the obligatory level of complete Īmān. Thus, whoever affirms for himself that he has attained complete Īmān has, in fact, praised himself. With this, I conclude what I intended to clarify regarding the term *Īmān*.

Since we have been speaking about Īmān, it is suitable now to talk about its opposite, which is:

Kufr (Disbelief):

Kufr is the opposite of Īmān.

Kufr is divided into two types:

1. Major disbelief (al-Kufr al-Akbar)
2. Minor disbelief (al-Kufr al-Aṣghar)

Major disbelief nullifies Īmān from every angle—it removes the foundation of Īmān—because it is its opposite. Whoever falls into major disbelief has his Īmān nullified.

Major Disbelief (al-Kufr al-Akbar) is divided into two categories:

1. Original Disbelief
2. Apostasy

First Category: Original Disbelief (al-Kufr al-Aṣlī): It refers to those who have never embraced Īmān at all, and it is divided into the following types:

- Denial
- Arrogance
- Turning away
- Doubt
- Hypocrisy

First: Denial – meaning: to believe that the Messengers are lying.

Second: Arrogance – meaning: to arrogantly refuse to believe, like the case of Iblīs:

﴿إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“Except Iblīs, he refused and was proud, and he was one of the disbelievers.” [Sūrah al-Baqarah: 34]

He knew Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ and even swore by His Might; yet, he did not believe due to arrogance.

Third: Turning Away – to turn away from listening to the Messenger, neither affirming nor denying him. This, too, is original disbelief.

Fourth: Doubt – meaning: to doubt the truthfulness of the Messenger.

Fifth: Hypocrisy is when a person hides disbelief and outwardly displays Islām.

Second Category of Major Disbelief: Apostasy (Kufr ar-Riddah): This refers to someone who initially came with Īmān but then committed one of the nullifiers of Īmān. Apostasy can occur by:

- A statement of the heart
- A statement of the tongue

- An action of the heart
- An action of the limbs

Statement of the Heart – such as doubting one of Allāh’s obligations or denying one of Allāh’s obligations.

Statement of the Tongue – such as reviling Allāh ﷺ or reviling His religion.

Action of the Heart – such as hating the Prophet ﷺ or what he came with.

Action of the Limbs – such as prostrating to a grave or prostrating to an idol.

Just as a statement can nullify Īmān, so too can an action nullify Īmān. However, we have an essential principle regarding apostasy:

“General takfīr (declaring an act to be disbelief) does not necessitate takfīr of a specific individual unless the conditions are met and the preventatives are absent.”

So, whoever falls into an act of apostasy, we do not immediately declare him a disbeliever. Instead, the conditions must be fulfilled, and the preventatives must be absent.

For example, if a person utters a statement of disbelief, we must investigate: Were the conditions met? Was he insane? Was he coerced?

Allāh ﷺ says:

﴿مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ﴾

“Whoever disbelieves in Allāh after his belief—except for one who was forced while his heart is secure in faith...” [Sūrah an-Nahl: 106]

Therefore, general takfīr does not entail specific takfīr except after verifying that the conditions are met and the preventatives are absent.

Rulings of Major Disbelief:

1. Its doer will reside eternally in the Hellfire. Allāh said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ ﴾

“Verily, those who disbelieve among the People of the Book and the polytheists will be in the Fire of Hell, abiding therein. They are the worst of creatures.” [Sūrah al-Bayyinah: 6]

2. It removes a person from the religion; he is no longer a Muslim.
3. It invalidates the person’s deeds, as Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾

“And whoever disbelieves in Īmān, then all his deeds are in vain, and in the Hereafter, he will be among the losers.” [Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 5]

As for Minor Disbelief (al-Kufr al-Aṣghar): It contradicts the obligatory completeness of Īmān. So, whoever commits minor disbelief does not lose Īmān completely; rather, its foundation remains.

An example of this: is the statement of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

«لَا تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ»

“Do not return after me as disbelievers, striking the necks of one another.”
[Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

He called unjust killing “disbelief,” and what is intended here is: minor disbelief, because Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ testified to the Īmān of those who fight, as He said:

﴿وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا﴾

“And if two parties among the believers fall into fighting...” [Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 9]

This indicates that the intended meaning of *disbelievers* in his statement, **“Do not return after me as disbelievers,”** is minor disbelief.

Rulings of Minor Disbelief:

1. Its doer does not exit the fold of Islām. Therefore, whoever kills a person unjustly is not declared a disbeliever; he remains a Muslim.
2. It diminishes the obligatory level of Īmān. So, whoever commits minor disbelief, his Īmān is reduced.
3. It does not require eternal residence in Hellfire. Instead, he is under the will of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ: if He wills, He will punish him; and if He wills, He will forgive him.

Lesson 14: The Companions (aṣ-Ṣaḥābah)

The word “aṣ-Ṣaḥābah” is the plural of “Ṣaḥābī.” A Ṣaḥābī is anyone who saw the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ during his lifetime, after his Prophethood, while believing in him, and who died upon that. Thus, anyone who saw the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, even for a moment, is considered a Ṣaḥābī.

This seeing must be a physical experience during wakefulness, not a vision during sleep. Whoever saw the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in a dream is not counted as a Ṣaḥābī.

It is essential that this sighting occurred during the Prophet’s life while awake. Whoever saw the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ while awake after his death is not considered a Ṣaḥābī. Furthermore, it must have been during his life after his Prophethood. Anyone who saw him during his life before Prophethood is also not regarded as a Ṣaḥābī. Instead, it should have been after the Prophet’s commissioning صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Also, the one who saw him must have done so while believing in him. Whoever saw him after his Prophethood while being a disbeliever is not a Ṣaḥābī.

Furthermore, he must have died upon Īmān. If he died upon disbelief, he is not considered a Ṣaḥābī.

This is supported by what has come from Abū Umāmah, who said: The Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

«طُوبَى لِمَنْ رَأَى وَأَمَنَ بِي، وَطُوبَى لِمَنْ آمَنَ بِي وَلَمْ يَرِنِي -سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ-»

“Glad tidings to the one who saw me and believed in me, and glad tidings to the one who believed in me but did not see me—seven times over.”

[Reported by Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*]

This proves that companionship is established simply by seeing the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and the blind person is in the ruling of one who sees.

These are the Companions. What are their qualities?

The Companions have great qualities, among them:

First: They are upright and trustworthy. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ declared them upright from above the seven heavens:

﴿ وَالسَّيِّقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴾

“And the foremost to embrace Islām of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, and also those who followed them exactly (in faith). Allāh is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.” [Sūrah at-Tawbah: 100]

Allāh’s commendation of the companions includes a declaration of their uprightness. The Companions—from the first to the last—are upright due to the commendation of Allāh and the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. And Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

﴿ وَكَلَّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى ﴾

“And all of them Allāh has promised the best.” [Sūrah al-Ḥadīd: 10]

The Companions have crossed the Qanṭarah (bridge of accountability and purification).

Second: The excellence of their hearts. Ibn Mas‘ūd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ نَظَرَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْعِبَادِ فَوَجَدَ قَلْبَ مُحَمَّدٍ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) خَيْرَ قُلُوبِ الْعِبَادِ فَاصْطَفَاهُ لِنَفْسِهِ، فَاتَّبَعْتُهُ بِرِسَالَتِهِ، ثُمَّ نَظَرَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْعِبَادِ بَعْدَ قَلْبِ مُحَمَّدٍ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)، فَوَجَدَ قُلُوبَ أَصْحَابِهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) خَيْرَ قُلُوبِ الْعِبَادِ، فَجَعَلَهُمْ وُزَرَءَ نَبِيِّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)، يُقَاتِلُونَ عَلَى دِينِهِ»

“Indeed, Allāh looked into the hearts of the slaves and found the heart of Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to be the best of the hearts of His slaves, so He chose him for Himself and sent him with His message. Then He looked into the slaves’ hearts after the heart of Muḥammad and found the hearts of his Companions to be the best of the slaves’ hearts, so He made them the ministers of His Prophet, fighting for His religion.” [Reported by Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, and it holds the ruling of being raised to the Prophet]

This virtue was testified to by Allāh—the All-Knowing, the All-Aware.

Third: They are better than all who came after them. Any single Companion is better than all who came after them due to the excellence of their hearts and Allāh’s commendation of them.

Absolute virtue belongs to each Companion of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. No one after the Companions, regardless of his status, is better than even one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, even if his time spent with the Prophet was short.

What is the Ummah’s duty toward the Companions?

First: Loving them. This is because Allāh loves the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and because the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ loves his Companions.

One may ask: How do we know that Allāh loves them?

It is said: Because He is pleased with them, prepared for them Gardens beneath which rivers flow, and commanded us to follow their example. So, we love the Companions because Allāh ﷺ loves them, and His Messenger loves them.

We also love them because they—may Allāh be pleased with them—are the transmitters of the religion, through which we attain salvation with Allāh ﷺ. Since they transmitted the religion through which we are saved, we love them.

Moreover, they fought in support of the religion of Allāh ﷺ and this also obligates loving them.

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, it is narrated from al-Barā' رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said:

I heard the Prophet ﷺ —or he said: The Prophet ﷺ said:

«الْأَنْصَارُ لَا يُحِبُّهُمْ إِلَّا مُؤْمِنٌ، وَلَا يُبْغِضُهُمْ إِلَّا مُنَافِقٌ، فَمَنْ أَحَبَّهُمْ أَحَبَّهُ اللَّهُ، وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَهُمْ أَبْغَضَهُ اللَّهُ»

“None loves the Anṣār except a believer, and none hates them except a hypocrite. Whoever loves them, Allāh loves him, and whoever hates them, Allāh hates him.”

Second: Honoring and respecting them. We magnify and honor the Companions because of their uprightness, excellence of heart, and other noble traits.

Third: Supplicating for mercy upon them and seeking forgiveness for them, as Allāh says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا
بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

“And those who came after them say: Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and put no hatred in our hearts against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.” [Sūrah al-Ḥaṣhr: 10]

It is a sign of Ahl as-Sunnah that they ask Allāh to have mercy on the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh and seek forgiveness for them, in contrast to the people of innovation.

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said:

«أَمُرُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لَهُمْ فَسَبَوْهُمْ، ثُمَّ قَرَأْتُ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ: ((وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ)) الْآيَةَ»

“They were commanded to seek forgiveness, but instead they reviled them. Then I recited this Āyah: ‘And those who came after them say: Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith...’ [Reported by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *at-Tafsīr*]

Fourth: Refraining from delving into what occurred among them. Whatever transpired among the Companions, the obligation is to withhold and refrain from it. If we indulge in the disputes that occurred among the Companions, this leads to hating them, which contradicts the obligation to love them.

Speaking about their faults or what transpired among them leads to hating them, and hating them is forbidden. Whatever leads to something forbidden is itself forbidden.

Thus, the obligation is to refrain from what occurred among the Companions.

As for what happened among them, they were either a mujtahid who was correct and received two rewards or a mujtahid who erred and received one reward.

Much of what is mentioned regarding what happened among the Companions is either outright false, exaggerated, minimized, or misrepresented.

Safety lies in withholding from what occurred among the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

This is what relates to the Companions. And we have an important principle:

Allāh was pleased with the creed and methodology of the Companions. There is no safety and no salvation except through following them in excellence.

The evidence of this is His statement ﷺ:

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

“And the foremost to embrace Islām of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār and also those who followed them exactly (in faith), Allāh is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.” [Sūrah at-Tawbah: 100]

So, whoever wants Allāh ﷻ to be pleased with him must follow the Companions in excellence—in their creed and their methodology.

Therefore, it is essential to follow the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. One's creed cannot be correct except by following the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh, and one's worship cannot be correct except by following the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

So, whoever desires Paradise must follow the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Whoever desires that Allāh be pleased with him must follow the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

As for reviling, criticizing, or declaring them disbelievers, this is one of the nullifiers.

Lesson 15: Imāmah (Leadership)

What is meant by “Imām” in the chapter of Imāmah is: the ruler (sulṭān).

Ways of Appointing the Imām:

There are two ways of appointing the Imām:

1. By choice
2. By necessity

As for the choice method, it is derived from the practices of the rightly guided Caliphs and is Sunnah, as the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded following them. He said:

«عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي، وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي»

“Cling to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs after me.”
[Reported by Abū Dāwūd]

This choice method includes two forms:

First form: The pledge of allegiance (bay‘ah) by Ahl al-ḥall wa-al-‘aqd (those with authority and influence). They pledge allegiance to the one who fulfills the conditions of Imāmah.

Ahl al-ḥall wa-al-‘aqd: are those people of strength and influence.

An example of this is the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr and ‘Alī.

Second form: When the current leader appoints a successor. This itself includes two cases:

1. The ruler appoints a specific individual by name, as Abū Bakr did when he appointed ‘Umar and explicitly designated him.
2. The ruler appoints a group and entrusts the matter to them, as ‘Umar did with the six Companions, placing the matter of succession among them as a matter of consultation (*shūrā*).

The necessary method refers to leadership attained without the prescribed *Shar‘ī* manner, such as when one seizes power by force. If someone gains leadership by force and authority is stabilized under him, the scholars unanimously agree that he becomes the Imām.

The Ruling of Pledging Allegiance to the Imām: Giving bay‘ah (allegiance) to the Imām is an individual obligation upon every Muslim, due to the statement of the Prophet ﷺ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:

«وَمَنْ مَاتَ وَلَيْسَ فِي عُنُقِهِ بَيْعَةٌ مَاتَ مِيتَةَ جَاهِلِيَّةٍ»

“Whoever dies without having a pledge of allegiance on his neck dies a death of jāhiliyyah (pre-Islāmic ignorance).”

Describing such a death as one of jāhiliyyah indicates prohibition. Thus, it is prohibited for a person not to pledge allegiance to the Imām, and the prohibition of a thing implies a command for its opposite, so it is a command to pledge allegiance.

However, it is Ahl al-ḥall wa-al-‘aqd who directly pledge allegiance and shake the hand of the Imām. As for those besides them, their bay‘ah is considered a following in ruling and not by individual handshaking.

So, no one should say: “There is no bay‘ah on my neck because I did not shake the Imām’s hand.” As soon as Ahl al-ḥall wa-al-‘aqd give their bay‘ah, the rest of the people are considered to have done so by extension and ruling.

The Pledge of Allegiance must not be for worldly gain. Whoever gives bay‘ah for the sake of the world will face a painful punishment, as mentioned in the ḥadīth:

«وَرَجُلٌ بَايَعَ إِمَامًا لَا يُبَايِعُهُ إِلَّا لِدُنْيَا، فَإِنْ أَعْطَاهُ مِنْهَا وَفِي لَهْ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطَهُ مِنْهَا لَمْ يَفِ لَهْ»

“And a man who gives allegiance to an Imām only for worldly gain—if he is given some of it, he fulfills (his pledge), and if not, he does not fulfill it.”
[Reported by al-Bukhārī]

The Rights of the Ruler over the Ruled:

The ruler has rights that the subjects must fulfil:

First Right: Listening and obedience in what is right. A person must listen and obey the ruler in what is right, as Allāh ﷻ says:

﴿يَتَائِبَهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ﴾

“O you who have believed, obey Allāh and the Messenger and those in authority among you.” [Sūrah an-Nisā’: 59]

He commanded obedience to the ruler, and the default of a command is an obligation.

The meaning of “in what is right” is: if he commands something sinful, then he is not to be obeyed in that sin, but general obedience remains in all other matters. The Prophet ﷺ said:

«عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ: السَّمْعُ، وَالطَّاعَةُ، فِيمَا أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ، إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمَرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ، فَإِنْ أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ»

“It is upon the Muslim to hear and obey what he likes and dislikes, unless commanded to sin. If he is commanded to sin, then there is no hearing or obedience.” [Reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

Second Right: Offering sincere advice to him. Advice for the ruler must be given in private, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ نَصِيحَةٌ لِمَنْ فِي سُلْطَانٍ فَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُ بِهَا عَلَانِيَةً، وَلِيَأْخُذَ بِيَدِهِ،
وَلِيُخَلِّ بِهٖ، فَإِنْ قَبِلَهَا قَبِلَهَا، وَإِلَّا كَانَ قَدْ أَدَّى الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ وَالَّذِي لَهُ»

“Whoever has advice for one in authority should not speak to him publicly, but should take him by the hand and speak to him privately. If he accepts it, then good; and if not, he has fulfilled his duty.” [Reported by al-Ḥākim], for the sake of public welfare.

So, whoever has advice for the ruler must do it privately and not speak to him about it publicly. If he accepts, then good. If not, then the one advising has fulfilled what is upon him.

Public criticism of the ruler is not permissible except in one case: when the ruler is present in front of you, as was done with Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam.

From Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb, in the ḥadīth of Abū Bakr, he said:

«أَوَّلُ مَنْ بَدَأَ بِالْحُطْبَةِ يَوْمَ الْعِيدِ قَبْلَ الصَّلَاةِ مَرْوَانَ، فَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ: الصَّلَاةُ
قَبْلَ الْحُطْبَةِ فَقَالَ: قَدْ تُرِكَ مَا هُنَالِكَ. فَقَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ: أَمَّا هَذَا فَقَدْ قَضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ،
سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) يَقُولُ: مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ
بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَوْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ»

“The first one to begin the ‘Eid sermon before the prayer was Marwān. A man stood and said: ‘Prayer before the sermon.’ Marwān replied: ‘What was there is no longer practiced.’ Abū Sa‘īd said: ‘This one has fulfilled what is upon him. I heard the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say: ‘Whoever among you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then use his tongue. If he is unable, then with his heart, and that is the weakest of Īmān.’” [Reported by Muslim]

Public criticism is prohibited because it causes great harm, such as the shedding of blood, violation of honor, and chaos in the land. The

Shari'ah prohibits all forms of corruption, whether complete or predominant.

Third Right: Honoring the ruler. The ruler must be honored because he will not be heard or obeyed if he is not honored. It is narrated in *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ أَهَانَ سُلْطَانَ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَهَانَهُ اللَّهُ»

“Whoever humiliates the ruler of Allāh on earth, Allāh will humiliate him.”

Fourth Right: It is prohibited to rebel against a Muslim ruler. It is not permissible to rebel against a Muslim ruler even if he is sinful, due to the evidence obligating obedience and adherence to the Jamā'ah (main body of Muslims).

It is narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«خِيَارُ أئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَكُمْ، وَتُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْهِمْ - أَي: تَدْعُونَ-، وَيُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَشَرَارُ أئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِي تُبْغِضُونَكُمْ، وَتَلْعَنُونَهُمْ وَيَلْعَنُونَكُمْ. فَقَالَ الصَّحَابَةُ: أَفَلَا نُنَابِذُهُمْ بِالسَّيْفِ؟ فَقَالَ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): لَا، مَا أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ مِنْ وَلَايِكُمْ تَكْرَهُونَهُ، فَاکْرَهُوا عَمَلَهُ وَلَا تَنْزِعُوا يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ»

“The best of your leaders are those whom you love and who love you, and you supplicate for them and they supplicate for you. And the worst of your leaders are those whom you hate and who hate you, and you curse them and they curse you.” The Companions asked: “Should we not fight them with the sword?” He said, “No, as long as they establish the prayer. If you see something you hate from your rulers, dislike the deed, but do not remove your hand from obedience.”

Our Prophet (May Allāh elevate his rank and grant him peace) instructed that we hate the act but not withdraw from obedience.

In another ḥadīth in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, it states:

«تُؤَدُّونَ الَّذِي لَهُمْ، وَتَسْأَلُونَ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَكُمْ»

“Give them what is due to them, and ask Allāh for what is due to you.”

By scholarly consensus, it is prohibited to rebel against the Muslim ruler, except if he commits apparent, manifest disbelief about which we have proof from Allāh, as the Prophet ﷺ said.

So, the disbelief must be actual disbelief, and it must be clear and manifest, meaning it is obvious and evident, with no doubt, and we have proof from Allāh concerning it.

Thus, when is it permissible to rise against the ruler? When he falls into apparent, manifest disbelief. But even then, the individual ruler must be declared a disbeliever by name, not merely for committing disbelief, and only after the conditions are fulfilled and the preventatives are absent.

Imām Aḥmad—when the rulers in his time adopted the saying that the Qur’ān is created, and the Salaf had unanimously agreed that this position is disbelief—still did not permit rebellion against them because the conditions of takfir were not fulfilled.

In conclusion, I say:

This is the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah wa-al-Jamā'ah—the creed of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Whoever holds fast to it is saved, and whoever deviates from it is misguided and threatened with the Fire. May Allāh bless our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions, and grant them peace.

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[Muslim]

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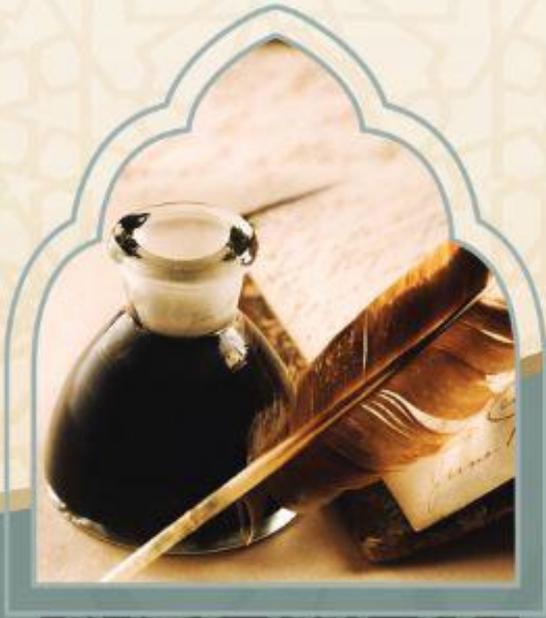
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