

# The Muslim Creed

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 Editorial

Each person is born in a circumstance which is not of his own choosing. The religion of his family or the ideology of the state is thrust upon him from the very beginning of his existence in this world. By the time he reaches his teens, he is usually fully brainwashed into believing that the beliefs of his particular society are the correct beliefs that everyone should have. However, when some people mature and are exposed to other belief-systems, they begin to question the validity of their own beliefs.

The seekers of truth often reach a point of confusion upon realizing that each and every religion, sect, ideology and philosophy claims to be the one and only correct way for man. Indeed, they all encourage people to do good. So, which one is right? They cannot all be right since each claims all others are wrong. Then how does the seeker of truth choose the right way?

God gave us all minds and intellects to enable us to make this crucial decision. It is the most important decision in the life of a human being, for his future depends on it. Consequently, each and every one of us must dispassionately examine the evidence presented and choose what appears to be right until further evidence arises.

Like every other religion or philosophy, Islam also claims to be the one and only true way to God. In this respect it is no different from other systems. However, it must always be kept in mind that one can only determine the true path by putting aside emotions and prejudices, which often blind us to reality. Then, and only then, will we be able to use our God-given intelligence and make a rational and correct decision.

There are several arguments that may be advanced to support Islam's claim to be the true religion of God. The following are only three of the most obvious. The first argument is based on the divine origin of the names of the religion and the comprehensiveness of its meaning. The second deals with the unique and uncomplicated teachings concerning the relationship between God, man, and creation. The third argument derives from the fact that Islam is universally attainable by all men at all times. These are the three basic components of what logic and reason dictate necessary for a religion to be considered the true religion of God. ■

# The Importance of 'Aqeedah

All Muslims agree that matters of 'Aqeedah (creed) are the most important aspect of knowledge. Imam Abu Hanifah, for example, wrote a book on 'Aqeedah and called it, "Al-Fiqh Al-Akbar," which means, "The Grand Fiqh."

People need this knowledge the most. The hearts will perish and will have no peace or happiness without it. They have no way of achieving tranquility and restfulness without knowing their Lord and Creator, His Names and His Attributes. All this will lead one to revering Allah, seeking His pleasure and loving Him more than he loves anything else.

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***Nothing can unite the Muslim Ummah except the Islamic 'Aqeedah; not nationalism, racism, patriotism, socialism, or any other system.***

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Knowing Allah is impossible without His help. His Mercy is

evident by His sending Prophets and Messengers to call people unto Him, to give glad tidings to those who obey Him and to warn those who defy Him. The key to all Prophets' messages is Taw'hid and what it entails of Allah's Names, Attributes and Actions. The religion is built on this noble knowledge, from beginning to end.

After knowing the importance of 'Aqeedah, two fundamental matters must follow. First, knowing the path to Allah, and this can be attained through His Commandments. Second, describing His bounties prepared for those who seek His pleasure. The ones who have the best knowledge in Allah are His followers who know the good end and destination of those who seek to please Him.

## **Knowing, Studying and Spreading the 'Aqeedah**

1-- 'Aqeedah unites the hearts and goals of the Ummah. The goal of all true Muslims is to fight Shirk, misguidance, injustice and sin, and also to spread Taw'hid, justice, truth and righteousness among people.

Allah said, what translated means, *﴿And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope (Path) of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allah's favor on you, for you were enemies and He joined your hearts together, so that by His grace, you became brethren (in Islam), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His Ayat (signs) clear to you, that you may be guided.﴾* [3:103], and, *﴿And He has united*

*their* (the believers') *hearts*. *If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have united their hearts, but Allah has united them. Certainly He is All-Mighty, All-Wise.* ﴿[8:63].

*And we* (the believers) *are His worshippers.* ﴿[2:137-138].

The Islamic 'Aqeedah is the path designated by Allah to lead people to Paradise and eternal bliss. It

is the one that deserves Allah's help and victory and which He revealed to dominate all other

religions. He said, what translated means, ﴿*If you help* (in the cause of) *Allah, He will help you.* ﴿[47:7]. There is no victory in this life or safety on the Day of Judgment except with this 'Aqeedah.

3-- Allah does not accept good deeds performed by His slaves unless their 'Aqeedah is correct. Otherwise, their deeds will vanish on the Day of Judgment. His said, what translated means, ﴿*Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer* (of Islam), *verily, to him We will give a good life, and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do.* ﴿[16:97], ﴿*Verily! As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, certainly! We shall not suffer to be lost the reward of anyone who does his (righteous) deeds in the most perfect manner.* ﴿[18:30], and, ﴿*So whoever does righteous good deeds while he is a*

*believer* (in Taw'hid), *his efforts will not be rejected. Verily! We record it in his Book of deeds.* ﴿[21:94].

As for those who disbelieve, Allah has said about them, ﴿*The parable of those who disbelieve in their Lord is that their works are as*

*ashes, on which the wind blows furiously on a stormy day, they shall not be able to get aught of what they have earned. That is the straying, far away* (from the right path). ﴿[14:18].

4-- The Prophet spent all of his thirteen years in Makkah, as a Prophet, establishing the Islamic 'Aqeedah and solidifying Iman in the hearts of his followers. To further show the importance of 'Aqeedah, almost all verses of the Quran revealed in Makkah were about it. Verses concerning Laws and Commandments were revealed after 'Aqeedah was established in the minds and hearts of the believers.

5 -- All prophets and messengers of Allah were sent with the same 'Aqeedah. 'Aqeedah was the same, although the Laws and Commandments varied from prophet to prophet. Allah said, what translated means, ﴿*And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger* (proclaiming), *“Worship Allah (Alone) and avoid Taghut* (all deities besides Allah).” ﴿[6:36], and, ﴿*And We did not send any Messenger before you* (O Mohammad) *but We inspired him* (saying), *“There is none who has the right to be worshipped but I* (Allah), *so worship Me* (Alone).” ﴿[21:25].

Allah also said, what translated means, ﴿*Truly, the religion in the Sight of Allah is Islam. Those who*

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***When a slave spends time to know his Lord, this time spent satisfies the reason behind his existence. If one ignores this matter, he would be ignoring what he was created to fulfill.***

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*were given the Scriptures* (Jews and Christians) *did not differ except after knowledge had come to them, through jealousy and transgression among themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the Ayat* (versus, signs) *of Allah, then surely, Allah is Swift in calling to account.* ﴿[3:19]. Imam Ibn

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***The requirements of Iman are not satisfied by merely saying, “I believe in Allah.” Iman requires one to know the Lord he is worshipping and His Names and Attributes.***

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Before Islam, the Arabs were enemies of each other, divided, with hatred towards each other and with no goals to live for. The Islamic 'Aqeedah united them and made out of them the greatest nation ever. They became leaders and masters of nations after they were shepherds. Allah, all praise be to Him, made this transformation possible.

Nothing can unite this Ummah except this 'Aqeedah; not nationalism, racism, patriotism, socialism, or any other system. This great belief is built around following the Quran, the Sunnah, and our righteous ancestors of the companions and all those who followed them with excellence. It is the 'Aqeedah of knowledge and education, and it is a clear and simple one. Illiterate Bedouins immediately understood it when it was presented to them, and then when they delivered it to their people, they too believed in it with speed and ease.

2-- This nation will not be a true Muslim nation unless it follows the Right Path and the correct belief of our righteous ancestors. Allah said, what translated means, ﴿*So if they believe in the like of that which you believe, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So Allah will suffice you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. The Sibghah* (way) *of Allah, and which Sibghah can be better than Allah's?*

Kathir said, “Allah’s saying, *Truly, the religion in the Sight of Allah is Islam*, is a revelation from Him that the only accepted religion is Islam. Beforehand, Islam was following the Messengers in whatever Allah has sent down to them, until Allah sent their last and seal, Mohammad, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam. Then, Allah blocked every path to Him except through Prophet Mohammad. Whoever meets Allah, after He had sent Prophet Mohammad, believing in other than his religion and laws, it will not be accepted of him. Allah said, *And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him.* [3:85].”

Also, the Prophet has said, what translated means, “*Prophets are brothers and descendants of one father* (sent with the same belief). *Their mothers* (their Laws) *are different, but their religion is one.*” [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]. Therefore, the prophets were all sent with the same belief, although their Laws were different.

‘Aqeedah contains the most noble knowledge, the knowledge in Allah, which is a cornerstone of Iman and its origin. Everything comes after knowledge in Allah. The requirements of Iman are not satisfied by merely saying, “I believe in Allah.” Iman requires one to know the Lord he is worshipping and His Names and Attributes. This will solidify Iman (faith) and Yaqin (certainty in Allah). The more knowledge in Allah the salve has, the more his Iman increases. When knowledge in Allah increases, belief in Him increases as well. The accepted way of knowing Allah’s Names and Attributes is through understanding the Quran and the Sunnah.

Allah, the Praised One, created mankind so they worship Him, *And I (Allah) created not the Jinn and Men except they should worship*

*Me (Alone).* [51:56]. However, mankind cannot worship Allah unless they know Him. This knowledge of Allah is needed to satisfy the reason and wisdom behind creation.

When a slave spends time to know his Lord, this time spent satisfies the reason behind his existence. If one ignores this matter, he would be ignoring what he was created to fulfill. Allah’s Bounties and Sustenance are innumerable on His slaves. Therefore, it is evil indeed for the slaves to ignore knowing their Lord, His Names and His Attributes.

To further show the importance of knowing Allah, we must note that most of the Ayat in the Quran contain some of Allah’s Names and Attributes. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah said, “The Quran contains more references to Allah’s Names and Attributes than what it contains of matters of foods, drinks and sex (pleasures) in Paradise. Also, the Ayat that mention Allah’s Names and Attributes are more than those mentioning the Last Day. The greatest of Allah’s Ayat of the Quran is Ayat Al-Kursi (Ayah of the Throne, [2:255]). It only contains this matter (Allah’s Names and Attributes). Imam Muslim related an authentic Hadith, in

which the Messenger of Allah, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam, asked Ubai ibn Kaa’b, ‘*Do you know which Ayah in Allah’s Book is the greatest?*’ Kaa’b answered, ‘*Allah! None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever Living, the One who sustains and protects all that exists...*’ [2:255].’ The Messenger lovingly pushed him on the chest, saying, ‘*Congratulations, Abu Al-Munthir for this* (correct) *knowledge.*’ Also, many correct Hadiths state that the Messenger said, ‘*Say* (O Mohammad), “*He is Allah, the One*” [Surah 112], *equals one third of the Quran.*’ The Messenger also gave the glad tidings of Allah’s Love and Acceptance for the companion who used to always read it (Surah 112 of the Quran) and saying that he loves it because it contains Attributes of the Allah. The Messenger confirmed that Allah loves whoever loves His Attributes. This subject is very wide.”

For all the above reasons, As-Salaf As-Saleh (our righteous ancestors) took special care to preserve the ‘Aqeedah: studying, teaching and writing about it. Also, their loyalty was tied to it. They also implemented and adhered to its requirements, and they were truthful in all this. ■

## Good Conduct With Allah

It is indeed a part of good conduct and manners that Muslims must observe is good conduct with Allah, for Allah’s rights are the ones that must be observed and fulfilled the most. One of the ways of fulfilling this is that every Muslim must not have the slightest doubt or hesitation in believing anything Allah says, because He Speaks from Knowledge and He is the Most Truthful of all. He has said, what translated means, *And who is truer in statement than Allah?* [4:87]. As a consequence of believing in the truthfulness of Allah, we have to be certain in what He tells us, defend His statements and spread them, while fully accepting and submitting to what He and His Messenger have told us.

If the Muslim conducts himself in this manner, then he will be able to repel all doubts the evil and misguided ones cast regarding what Allah and His Messenger have informed us of, whether these people are deviant Muslims or disbelieving Kuffar who seek to misguide Muslims and lead them into the darkness of Kufr.

**A**l-Gheebah is when a Muslim mentions his Muslim brother in a manner that he hates. This includes ridiculing his physical features, family status, behavior, actions, speech, the way he conducts his religion or his life affairs, the way he dresses and even his place of dwelling. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam, said, what translated means, **“Do you know what Al-Gheebah means?”** The companions answered, “Allah and His Messenger have more knowledge.” He said, **“It is when you mention your brother (in his absence) by that which he hates.”** One man asked, “But what if my brother was just like I have described?” The Prophet replied, **“If he was just like what you described, then you will have backbitten him. However, if he was not like that, then you will have falsely accused him (which is even a graver sin).”** [Muslim].

Al-Gheebah is prohibited, whatever the reason behind it, such as if one wants to satisfy his heart’s hatred for the other person, or to please his company and converse with them with this type of speech. Also, backbiting and mentioning other people’s mistakes may occur by someone to produce laughter, to show off, or out of envy, joyful play, joking or just to pass the time. Allah, the Exalted and Ever-High, has prohibited backbiting and other ill and hated behavior, when He said, what translated means, **﴿O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not,**

**neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful.** ﴿ [49:12].

Also, the Messenger of Allah said, what translated means, **“All the Muslim is prohibited for the Muslim: his blood, possessions and honor.”** [Muslim]. He also said during his Hajjat Al-Wadaa’ (Farewell Hajj), **“Your blood, possessions and honor are forbidden for you, just as this day of yours, in this month of yours, in this land of yours are prohibited (for you to violate their sanctity).”** [Al-Bukhari & Muslim], and, **“One of the worst cases of Riba (usury) occurs when one violates his brother’s honor (by backbiting him).”** [Al-Bazzar & Abu Dawood]. The authentic Hadiths that prohibit and warn against backbiting are numerous.

Al-Gheebah is prohibited for Muslims because it causes division, disputes and anarchy. It also rages the fire of hatred, ill feelings, envy, hypocrisy and the destruction of affection and love between people. Furthermore, it entails lying, treachery, cheating, cunning, false accusations, cursing, swearing and exposing the victim’s mistakes. This is why it is a symbol for cowardice and weakness and is considered among the lowest types of evil behavior. This is the reason why those who indulge in backbiting will carry the heavy weight of these sins, leading them to Allah’s anger and severe torment. ■

# Taw'hid in

## *One's Intent and Aim*

Allah is One, He has no partners in His Actions (Rububiyyah) and right of worship (Uluhiyyah), nor does He have equals in His Names and Attributes. He is the Lord of the Worlds, Who alone deserves all forms of worship. The correct belief in Taw'hid necessitates the following:

1- To direct any act of worship to other than Allah, such as invocation, seeking help, vowing, slaughtering, reliance, fear, hope, love, and similar acts, is Shirk, no matter to whom that worship is directed, be it an angel, a

prophet, a righteous person, or anything else.

2- Among the fundamentals upon which worship is

based is that Allah is to be worshipped out of love, fear, and hope. To worship Allah out of any single aspect of that in exclusion to the other aspects is an act of deviance. Some scholars have said, "Whoever worships Allah only out of love is a heretic (Zindiqh). Whoever worships Allah only out of fear of His punishment is a 'Haruri (Khawarij, a misguided sect). And whoever worships Allah only out of hope in His Mercy is a Murji' (another misguided sect)."

3- Submission to, pleasure with, and absolute obedience are to be given only to Allah and His Messenger, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam. Believing that Allah is the only Judge is part of the belief that He alone is Lord and He alone is to be worshipped. He has no partner in His Judgment or Command. To legislate by what Allah has not permitted; to judge by laws devised by men; to follow other than the Shari'ah of Mohammad, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam; to replace any of the Shari'ah — are all acts of disbelief (Kufr). Whoever claims that one may step outside of the bounds of the Shari'ah has indeed disbelieved.

4- To judge by other than what Allah has sent down is at times Greater Kufr (Kufr Akbar), and at times it is a Kufr less than actual Kufr (Kufr Duna Kufr). An example of the former is to adhere to or to permit judgement by a Shari'ah other than that of Allah. An example of the latter is to turn away from Allah's Shari'ah in a specific incident due to one's desire, yet with one's overall adherence to the Shari'ah.

5- To divide the religion into an esoteric reality ('Haqiqah) to which the select distinguish themselves by adhering to in exclusion of the general body of Muslims, and an exoteric Shari'ah to which the general body of

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*To judge by other than what Allah has sent down is at times Greater Kufr, and at times it is a Kufr less than actual Kufr (Kufr Duna Kufr).*

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Muslims must adhere to in exclusion to the elite; or to exclude politics or other matters from the religion — are all falsehood.

Indeed whatever opposes the Shari‘ah —be it an esoteric reality, politics, or other than that— is either Kufr or deviance, depending on to the extent in which it is at variance with the Shari‘ah.

6- None knows the Unseen but Allah. The belief that anyone besides Allah knows the Unseen constitutes Kufr, with our faith that Allah has manifested some matters of the Unseen to His Messengers.

7- To believe in the truthfulness of the predictions of an astrologer or soothsayer is Kufr, and to merely approach and question him concerning the future is a grave sin.

8- The means of approach to Allah (Al-Wasilah) —which we have been commanded in the Quran to seek— is to draw close to Allah by the various acts of obedience legislated by the Shari‘ah. Drawing near to Allah (At-Tawassul) is three types:

i) A manner legislated by the Shari‘ah: Namely, to invoke Allah by calling upon His Names and mentioning His Attributes; or by mentioning one’s righteous deeds; or by mentioning the invocation of a righteous, living person on one’s behalf.

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***The belief that anyone besides Allah knows the Unseen constitutes Kufr, with our faith that Allah has manifested some matters of the Unseen to His Messengers.***

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ii) A manner which is a Bid‘ah: Namely, to draw near to Allah by any means not mentioned in the Shari‘ah, like invoking Allah by the persons of the

Prophets and the righteous, their status with Him, their right upon Him, or any manner similar to this.

iii) A manner which constitutes Shirk: Namely, to take the dead as intermediaries between oneself and Allah in worship — by praying to them, calling upon them in seeking the resolution of one’s needs, seeking their assistance, and similar acts.

9- The existence of Barakah — which is the affirmation, increase, and continuance of much good— in an object that occurs from Allah. He selects whom He wants from among His creatures with what He wants from that. One may not, therefore, affirm the existence of Barakah in an object or person except with an evidence confirming that. Barakah is found at certain:

- Times, like The Night of Al-Qadr.
- Places, like the three holy Masajid.
- Objects, like Zamzam well
- Actions, for every righteous action is blessed
- Individuals—like the Prophets.

It is impermissible to seek the Barakah of any individual — by their bodies or relics—

except that of Prophet Mohammad, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam. There exists no evidence to the existence of Barakah with any specific individual in this nation besides him. Seeking Barakah through him has ceased after

his death and the disappearance of his relics.

10- Seeking Barakah is among the matters established by the Shari‘ah alone. It is therefore impermissible to seek Barakah except in that which the evidence is mentioned.

11- Three types of actions occur by the visitors of graves:

i) Actions that are legislated by the Shari‘ah: Namely, to visit the graves with the intent of remembering the Hereafter, and greeting and praying for the dead.

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***Seeking Barakah is among the matters established by the Shari‘ah alone. It is therefore impermissible to seek Barakah except in that which the evidence is mentioned.***

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ii) Actions that constitute a Bid‘ah: Any action that negates the perfection of Taw‘hid and is in and of itself a means leading to Shirk. For example, to seek to worship and draw near to Allah at the graves of the righteous, to seek the Barakah of the dead, to offer the rewards of one’s good deeds to the dead, to set out and journey to the graves of the righteous, or any similar act which its prohibition is confirmed or which has no basis in the Shari‘ah.

iii) Actions that constitute Shirk and negate one’s Taw‘hid: Namely, to direct any act of worship to the dead, by praying to them, seeking their assistance, circumambulating their graves, slaughtering and vowing to them, etc.

12- Means carry the ruling of their aims. It is, therefore, required to forbid any mean which leads to Shirk in the worship of Allah, or to an heresy (Bid‘ah) in the religion. Every innovation is a Bid‘ah and every Bid‘ah is a deviation from the Truth. ■

# A Good *Bid'ah??!!*

Linguistically, “Bid’ah” means any new matter which had no precedent. Scholars of Fiqh and Hadith have given a number of definitions for the term “Bid’ah,” the best and clearest of which is, “Any matter that is invented after the Messenger had passed away, with the intent of drawing near to Allah by it.” By such a restriction, “with the intent of drawing near to Allah by it,” worldly innovations, such the invention of gunpowder, gum, automobiles, aeroplanes, and the likes, do not fall under this definition.

As for the classification by some people of Bid’ah into good and evil Bid’ah, such classification is false and has no basis in the Shari’ah. The correct classification is “religious” and

“worldly” Bid’ahs, as we have stated above. How could Bid’ah be classified into good

and evil, while such classifications contradicts the Quran and Sunnah?

1 -- As for the Quran, Allah the Exalted and Ever-High has said, what translated means, *“This day I*

*have perfected your religion for you* ... ﴿ [5:3]. Hence, the Prophet did not leave this world except after Islam was complete and in no need of any addition. Also, legislation is the right of the Lord of the Worlds, not man. Furthermore, if addition to the religion was permissible, then deletion from it would, likewise, be permissible. No Muslim can utter such nonsense.

2 -- As for the Sunnah, the Prophet said, what translated means, *“Beware of all introductions (into religion), for every innovation is a deviation (from the truth).”* [Muslim]. The word “all” is for generality, and no innovation falls out of this generalization except by a specific proof. Where is the specifier here so it may be said that there is a good Bid’ah? There is no exception here. Some claim that the specifier is the Hadith, “Whatever the Muslims deem good, then it is good with Allah.” The response to this is: First, this is not a Hadith of the Prophet, but rather, these are the words of Ibn Mas’ood, may Allah be pleased with him. Second, “the Muslims” here means “all Muslims,” or in other words, the Ijmaa’ (unanimity) of the Ummah. Ijmaa’ is a proof in the religion and can never be an error, no one can dispute that, for this is a fact affirmed by an authentic

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*Al-Bid’ah is any matter that is invented after the Messenger had passed away, with the intent of drawing near to Allah by it.*

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Hadith of the Prophet. This refutes their claim.


If people would strictly follow the Hadith of the Prophet, then they would know that much of the innovators' prayers upon the Prophet and supplications, which have been innovated by some so-called scholars or pseudo-Sufis, are Bid'ahs and astray actions, concerning which Allah has sent down proof of their impermissibility.

An example of such Bid'ahs is: Thikr by repeating the Name, "Allah, Allah, ..." alone or by saying, "Ya Hu, Ya Hu, ..." Another example is gathering in circles by the Murids (Sufi disciples) who claim that they are remembering Allah with such innovated Thikr. Also, the prayer of Ragha'ib is among the worst and ugliest forms of Bid'ah. This Bid'ah involves the performance of Thuhr prayer after Jumu'ah (Friday) prayer, by the pretext that the number attending Jumu'ah was less than forty, or that the Imam leading the prayer is not proficient in the recitation of the Quran. This is a Bid'ah that leads to Kufr if it is believed that Thuhr prayer after Jumu'ah is obligatory, and leads to astrayment if it is believed that it is recommended.

Another example of Bid'ah is the recitation of poems in praise of the Prophet before Fajr prayer or during the night of Jumu'ah (Friday) or its day. Some forms of wording of prayers upon the Messenger-- which the Sunnah makes no mention-- are like their statement, "O Allah! Bless Mohammad equal to number of what is in the Knowledge of Allah, lasting as long as the Ownership of Allah lasts." Or, "O Allah! Bless Mohammad whenever You are remembered by those who remember You, and whenever You are forgotten by those who are heedless of remembering You."

This is heresy, because these

wording of prayers were never reported of the Prophet, and the prayer upon the Prophet is among the greatest of actions drawing near to Allah. Allah has commanded us to do such in His Glorious Book, the Quran, by His Statement, *Allah sends His Blessing and Mercy on the Prophet (Mohammad) and His Angels ask Allah to bless him and forgive him. O you who believe! (Ask Allah) to bless him and (you should) salute him with the*

*best salutation.*" [33:56]. The reported wordings concerning Salat upon the Messenger are recorded in the books of Sunnah. Hence there is no need to introduce and innovate its wordings. Furthermore, Salat upon the Prophet, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam, is an act of worship, and worship is based upon Tawqif, meaning that acts of worship can only be revealed by Allah, not introduced by man. 

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# ***Ash-Shukr***

***(Part 2/2)***

**W**e previously defined the meaning of Ash-Shukr, which is to thank and appreciate Allah’s Blessings and Bounties upon us, and also affirmed the importance of this matter and its rewards. We will now, Allah willing, mention in detail some ways which, by Allah’s Grace, will help one achieve the status of Ash-Shukr:

1 -- Remembering Allah’s Bounties and that He is indeed the source of all bounties: Shukr for bounties or benefits received from others is an essential attribute of the righteous Muslim. The highest grade of Shukr is remembering Allah’s

Bounties and that He is the Source and Originator of all the Bounties that will ever exist.

This remembrance is one of the major means with which the slave can achieve the Shukr of Allah. It is Allah Who created us in the best shapes and forms, *“O man! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Most Generous? Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion; In whatever form He willed, He put you together.”* [82:6-8].

Also, Allah is the One Who gave us hearing and sight with which we can fully enjoy the bounties of life, *“Say it is He Who has created you, and endowed you with hearing (ears), eyes (seeing), and hearts. Little thanks you give.”* [67:23], and, *“Say (to the disbelievers), ‘Tell me, if Allah took away your hearing and your sight, and sealed up your hearts, who is there — an ‘Ilah’ (a god) other than Allah which could restore them to you?’ See how variously We explain the Ayat (proofs, verses, signs, revelations, etc.), yet they turn aside.”* [6:46].

Also, Allah is the Originator of all sustenance and provisions that we receive throughout our lifetime, *“Is not He (better than your so-called gods) Who originates creation, and shall thereafter repeat it, and Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Is there any god with Allah? Say, ‘Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful.’”* [27: 64]. Furthermore, Allah provides us with good health and strength. We have no power except that which He provides for us, and when we fall ill, it is He Who provides the cure for that illness. Allah mentioned that Prophet Ibrahim said, *“It is He Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me. And it is He Who*

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***Allah, the Exalted and Ever-High, will not accept the Shukr of the slave for His Bounties on him if the slave does not thank the people for their bounties on him.***

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*feeds me and gives me drink. And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.*” ﴿ [26:78-80].

It is Allah Who made the seas and rivers subservient for mankind to use as a means of transportation by ship and boat. It is He Who made the earth with its mountains and valleys subservient for mankind and made it easy for them to go about in it. It is He Who sent down the rain and raised the plants and vegetation from the earth so that mankind can drink and eat. Indeed, Allah’s Grace and Bounties can never be counted or measured, ﴿*And if you count the Blessings of Allah, never will you be able to count them. Verily! Man is indeed an extreme wrongdoer, a disbeliever.*﴾ [14:34].

Remembering these undisputed facts will always help the slave remember Allah and thank Him for these bounties and for His Grace and Mercy. This, indeed, will help the slave achieve the status of Ash-Shakir and will make his path on Shukr easy for him.

2 -- Ash-Shukr ensures the continuity and then the increase of Allah’s bounties: Allah said, what

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***The highest grade of Shukr is remembering all Allah’s Bounties on us and that He is the Source and Originator of all the Bounties that will ever exist.***

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translated means, ﴿*And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed, “If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My Blessings).”*﴾ [14:7]. This Ayah means, “If you are grateful for My Favors on you, then I will increase My Grace and Bounties for you.” This Ayah attests that thanking Allah will lead to an increase in His Grace and Bounties.

Imam Ibn Abi Ad-Dunya narrated that Ali bin Abi Talib once said to a man, “The Bounty is tied to Ash-Shukr, and Ash-Shukr leads to an increase in the Bounty. They are both tied together. Therefore, the increase from Allah will not stop until the slave stops Ash-Shukr.” Also, Umar bin Abd Al-’Aziz once said, “Preserve Allah’s Bounties by the Shukr for Allah.”

When the person remembers that Ash-Shukr leads to an increase in Allah’s Bounties and Grace, he will be encouraged to increase his Shukr of Allah to achieve such a goal.

3 -- The Kufr (being ungrateful) of Allah’s bounties is the cause for its decrease, and may also lead to its discontinuation: Allah said, what translated means, ﴿*And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed, “If you give thanks, I will give you more, but if you are Kafirun (thankless), verily! My Punishment is indeed severe.”*﴾ [14:7]. His saying, ﴿*“But if you are Kafirun, verily! My Punishment is indeed severe,”*﴾ means, “If you are ungrateful for My Bounties and Favor on you, then wait until you taste My Punishment.” In this Ayah, Allah, the Exalted and Ever-High, promises punishment in return for Kufr, just as He Promises rewards for Shukr.

Also, Allah said, what translated means, ﴿*That is so because Allah will never change a grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their ownelves. And verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.*﴾ [8:53]. This means that Allah does not change the Favor and Bounty that He bestows on

a population of people into punishment and wrath until they become ungrateful for His Grace and Favor.

Furthermore, Allah, the Praised and Ever-High, said, what translated means, ﴿*And Allah puts forward the example of a township (Makkah), that dwelt secure and well*

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***When one remembers that there are those who are richer than he is, then let him also remember that he has more than what some other people have.***

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*content; its provision coming to it in abundance from every place, but it (its people) denied the Favors of Allah (with ungratefulness). So Allah made it taste the extreme of hunger (famine) and fear, because of that (evil, denying Prophet Mohammad) which they (its people) used to do.*﴾ [16:112]. In this Ayah, Allah tells us about a community of people in Makkah, who used to live an easy life, safe and secure, with their provisions supplied to them from every place in the world. However, these people were ungrateful to Allah. This was when Allah changed their safety into fear and their abundance in sustenance into famine and droughts.

Therefore, the Kufr of Allah’s Favors and Bounties will cause their discontinuation. When the Muslim remembers this fact, he will be more eager to thank Allah and appreciate Him for His Grace, fearing that His Bounty may decrease or even be discontinued.

4 -- Ash-Shukr results in safety from Allah’s Wrath: Allah said, what translated means, ﴿*What has Allah to do by punishing you if you thanked (Him) and believed in Him. And Allah is Ever All-Appreciative (of good), All-Knowing.*﴾ [4:147]. This means that Allah does not punish the thankful believers. This is cer-

tainly great news for the believers. When the Muslim remembers this fact, he will appreciate the value of Ash-Shukr and will know its status with Allah. He will also appreciate his need for Ash-Shukr and its necessity for his safety.

5 -- Compare yourself with those who have less than you: The Messenger of Allah said, what translated means, ***“If one wants to compare himself with those who are bestowed with more money and better manners than he has, then let him instead compare himself with those who have less than what he has, and not with those who have more.”*** [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]. In his narration of this Hadith, Imam Muslim added that the Messenger said, ***“This is better, for this way, you will not be unappreciative of Allah’s Favor on you.”*** In this Hadith, the Messenger shows us another way of achieving the Shukr for Allah, which will also help us avoid being ungrateful to Him. If the Muslim compares what he has in terms of money, position, children or fame with those who possess more than what he has, then he must also compare himself with those who are less fortunate than he is. This will lead one to appreciate Allah’s Favor on him. Therefore, when one remembers that there are those who are richer than he is, then let him also remember that he has more than what many others have.

6 -- Thanking and appreciating people leads to thanking Allah: Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger said, what translated means, ***“He who does not thank the people will not thank Allah.”*** [Ahmad, Abu Dawood & Ibn ‘Hibban]. Imam Al-Khattabi said, “This Hadith has two possible meanings, one of which is that those whose habit is to ignore thanking people for their favors on them will also have the habit of falling into Kufr of Allah’s Bounty and abandoning Shukr for Him. The second meaning is that Allah, the Exalted and Ever-High,

will not accept the Shukr of the slave for His Bounties on him if the slave does not thank people for their bounties on him. This is because both of these types of Shukr (for people and for Allah) are tied together.”

This Hadith guides us to yet another way of achieving the Shukr of Allah, the Exalted and Ever-High. When the person is trained to thank and appreciate people for their help and good deeds towards him, he will be more able to thank Allah and be appreciative of Him. This attitude will make the slave more eager and thoughtful in extending Shukr to Allah, the Praised and Ever-High, for His Bounties and Grace, for He is the Source of all Bounties, Mercy and Grace, big and small.

7 -- Asking Allah to achieve the status of Ash-Shukr: The last way that will help the slave achieve the status of Ash-Shukr is invoking Allah’s Grace by asking Him to help him go on the path of Shukr and appreciation for His Favors. The Messenger encouraged the Muslims to do just that, when he said to Mu’ath, what translated means, ***“By Allah! I love you. Therefore, do not forget to say at the end of each prayer, ‘O Allah! Help me to remember You, make Shukr for You and excel in worshipping You.’”*** [Ahmad & At-Tirmithi].

## Allah Istawa Upon His Throne

Many people in the present time fall into errors in matters of creed, such as when they deny that Allah is the Most High and that He has risen above His Throne. They also commit acts that they think are Sunnah, while they are Bid’ah in reality.

Allah has stated in His Glorious Quran that He is above the creation, ***“Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days, and then He Istawa (rose over) the Throne (really, in a manner that suits His Majesty).”*** [7:54]. He has mentioned Al-Istiwa’ in seven Ayat in the Quran, such as the Ayah above.

When Imam Malik was asked about Al-Istiwa’, he replied, “Al-Istiwa’ is known, its essence is unknown, and believing in it is an obligation.” “Al-Istiwa’ is known” means it is literally known, as it means to rise above.

Furthermore, Allah said, what translated means, ***“So the judgment is only with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great!C [40:12], B...and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.”*** [2:255], and, ***“To Him ascend all the goodly words, and the righteous deeds exalt it.”*** [35:10].

Many other Ayat of the Quran assert the fact that Allah is above the creation and that He has risen above His Throne. This is also the creed of all those who follow the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam: the companions and all those who followed them with excellence.

# The Right of...

# Rulers & Subjects

**M**uslim rulers hold responsible positions, from heads of states to heads of ministries and departments. Rulers in Islam have certain rights on their subjects. Subjects, too, have rights on the rulers. Subjects have the right to be ruled justly and righteously, according to the way of our righteous ancestors. To follow the path of the Prophet, his companions and the righteous ancestors will lead to happiness and harmony for both the rulers and the ruled. Also, Allah will bless the efforts of the rulers and cause their subjects to be pleased with them and obey them. This way, rulers and subjects will please Allah and fulfill their duties towards Him.

Rulers have the right to be advised by their subjects. People must remind their leaders of Allah if they forget, and pray to Allah to make their leaders righteous. Subjects must obey their rulers except in matters of disobedience to Allah. Discontent, disharmony and disunity await the nation that disobeys its leaders. Allah said, what translated means, *“O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Mohammad), and those of you who are in authority.”* [4:59].

Also, Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated that the Prophet said, what translated means, *“On the Muslim (towards the ruler) the duties of obedience and adherence, in matters of his like or dislike, unless he is ordered to sin. If he is ordered to sin, then there is no obedience nor is there adherence.”* Furthermore, Abdullah bin Umar narrated that the companions were once traveling with the Prophet, when they camped to rest. They heard a herald of the Prophet calling them to congregate. Then, the Prophet said, what translated means, *“There is not a Prophet whom Allah sent, but a right on him is leading his nation to the best (behavior) he knows of, and warning them of the worst (behavior) he knows of. This nation of yours has its best times in the first (generation), and its*

*latter (generations) will face hardship and innovations you disown. Then calamities will come, each greater than the other. The believer will say in the face of one calamity, ‘This (calamity) will destroy me.’ Then in the next one he will say, ‘This (will destroy me).’ Therefore, whoever wants to be moved away from the Fire (Hell) and be entered into Paradise, let him die while believing in Allah and in the Last Day, and treat people how he likes to be treated. And whoever pledges allegiance to a ruler, both inwardly and in deed, let him obey him if he can. If another man seeks to remove him (the ruler), then cut the head of the latter (rebel).”* [Muslim].

Imam Muslim also narrated that a man asked the Prophet once, “O Messenger of Allah. If we were ruled by rulers who demand their rights and refrain from giving us ours, what do you command us to do?” The Prophet answered him when he repeated his question the second time by saying, what translated means, *“Hear and obey, for they are carrying the weight of what they do and you carry the weight of what you do.”*

Furthermore, the Prophet said to one of the companions, *“There will be rulers who will come after me, they will not follow my guidance or adhere to my Sunnah. And there will be some from among them who will have the hearts of devils in the body of a human.”* He then said, *“Hear and obey your ruler. Even if he whips your back and takes your money (unlawfully), hear and obey.”* [Muslim].

Helping people of authority carry out their duties is an obligation on the subjects. Muslims must observe the rights of their rulers along with enjoining righteousness and forbidding evil. Rulers cannot carry out their duties and rule without their nation’s help. Muslims must know their rights and duties in order for the Ummah to become successful and prosperous. ■

# Rights of The Children

**C**hildren, male or female, have many rights upon their parents. Being a good Muslims and worshipping Allah are matters that must be taught to children by their parents throughout their lives. Allah said, what translated means, *“O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones.”* [66:6]. Also, the Prophet said, what translated means, *“All of you are responsible (for something) and all of you will be asked about your responsibilities. The man*

*is responsible for his family and will be asked about his responsibility.”* [Al-Bukhari & Muslim].

*“And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, to them shall We join their offspring, and We shall not decrease the rewards of their deeds in anything. Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned.”* [52:21].

Also, the Messenger of Allah said, what translated means, *“If the slave (of Allah) dies, his (record of) deeds will end except for three (types of deeds): an ongoing charity, a useful knowledge that will be of benefit after him (after his death), or a righteous son (or daughter) who makes Du’aa’ (supplication to Allah) for him.”* [Muslim]. The tree -- offspring-- will produce good fruits if one takes good care of it!

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***On the Day of Judgment, Allah will question all parents about this responsibilities. To escape Allah’s punishment, parents must raise their children to be righteous and not do evil.***

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Children are a responsibility that Allah has bestowed upon parents. On the Day of Judgment, He will question all parents about this responsibilities. To escape Allah’s punishment, parents must raise their children to be righteous and not do evil. If children become righteous, then their parents will be happy in this life and even happier on the Day of Judgment. Allah said, what translated means,

Many parents ignore the rights their children have on them. They act as if Allah will not question them about how they raised their children. They do not advise them, do not care whom they take as friends, and do not care where their children go or how late they come home at night. Such parents care only about worldly possessions and themselves. They do not know that good, righteous children are better for them than all their possessions or

other people's possessions that they strive to preserve. Parents must take care of the religion and hearts of their children as much as they care for their clothing and food.

Children have the right to be spent on moderately. When parents spend money on their children, it is a way of thanking Allah. Otherwise, their children will inherit their parents' possessions after their death, whether the parents like it or not. The children may not, then, spend that money righteously, and their parents will then be asked about that too! Being miserly is not righteous.

Equal treatment of children is essential. All children must get their fair share, that is, similar to what their brothers and sisters receive. To give some children what is denied to others is injustice. The ones denied their due rights will then feel hatred towards their parents and also their brothers and sisters. Even giving the good and behaving child more than the bad and misbehaving one is not beneficial nor good. This may lead the children to behave themselves only to gain more favors from their parents, instead of doing it for the sake of Allah. Later,

such children may grow to become greedy, arrogant and evil doers.

Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated that once, Bashir gave his son, An-Numan, a servant as a gift. The Prophet asked Bashir, "*Did you give the same to all your children?*" Bashir replied, "No." The Prophet said, "*Then take the servant back.*" The Prophet then said, "*Fear Allah and treat your children equally.*" He also said, "*Seek other than me for a witness, for I will not be a witness to such injustice!*" The Prophet called this action by Bashir an "injustice."

It is permissible, however, to give some children what they need if the others do not need it. To buy more groceries, for example, for the one who needs it, is permissible. If one of the children needs medical care, it must be provided. If one needs money to marry, his parents can help him get married, and they do not have to do the same for their other children if they are not ready, still young, or if they are not in need of help.

If parents fear Allah in the treatment of their children, Allah's rewards will be great in this life as

well as on the Day of Judgment. Being righteous with the children will bring about blessings from Allah. Children will happily take care of their parents who treated them righteously and taught them how to be good Muslims. However, if parents are unjust with their children, how then do they expect their children to treat them later? Unjust parents will bear the consequences of raising unappreciative evildoers for children. ■

## Finger Nails

**Q** What is the ruling on lengthening fingernails and applying fingernail polish on them?

**A** Lengthening nails is in opposition to the Sunnah, for the Prophet said, what translated means, "*Al-Fitrah* (the natural way that Allah created in mankind) *is five parts: circumcision, Al-Isti'hadad* (shaving pubic hair using a razor) *shortening the mustache, clipping the nails and plucking underarm hair.*" [Al-Bukhari & Muslim].

Furthermore, nails should not be left without clipping for more than forty days, because Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, had said, "The Messenger of Allah, Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam, has set for us a time limit for shortening the mustache, clipping the nails, plucking underarm hair and shaving pubic hair, that we do not neglect any of these matters for more than forty nights." Furthermore, lengthening these things will resemble the animals and some of the Kuffar.

As for fingernail polish, it better be avoided, and removing it when performing Wudhu is necessary, because it prevents water from reaching the nails.

*Sheikh Abdulaziz Bin Baz*

## Woman Imam for Women

**Q** Can women choose an Imam from among them to lead them in the prayer in Ramadhan and in other times?

**Sheikh Saleh Al-Fouzan:** It is permissible for women to choose a woman from among them to lead them in the prayer, whether for Tarawi'h prayer in Ramadhan or for the five daily prayers. This can be done in the house of one of them or in any place that is away from men. This is because the Prophet Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam allowed Umm Waraqah to lead the prayer for the women of her house.

**Sheikh Abdulaziz Bin Baz** (may Allah bestow His Mercy upon him): There is no harm in doing this, for there have been numerous narrations from 'Aaishah, Umm Salamah and Ibn Abbas that indicate the permissibility of this action. As for the woman leading the prayer, she stands in the middle of the same line as the rest of the women (not in front of them in a line by herself as is the case for men), and she recites aloud in the prayer that requires loud recitation.

## ***Our Objectives***

- To project a clear image of the religion of Islam in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah as understood by as-Salaf as-Saleh (pious predecessors).
- To warn Muslims against all types of *Shirk* (Polytheism) and *Bid'ah* (innovation) related to religion, and against the sacrileges, the fabricated weak *Hadith* (Prophetic traditions) which mar the beauty of Islam.
- To oppose and refute the advent tenets and ideologies such as atheism, communism and sectarianism.
- To cooperate with Sunni Muslim organizations to achieve the above objectives.
- To propagate Islam amongst non-Muslims.

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