

NOW THAT

I HAVE

ACCEPTED

ISLAAM

Abu Bilaal Abdulrazaq bn Bello bn Oare

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Islaam...**

Abu Bilaal Abdulrazaq bn Bello bn Oare

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Now That I Have Accepted Islaam...

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Abu Bilaal

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Dedication

To my dear wife, ‘Aishah, and my lovely
daughter, Amatuddayyan.

Acknowledgement

Prophet Muhammad, the noblest of Allah's creation, blessings and peace be upon him, said: "One who does not show gratitude to people does not show gratitude to Allah".

In the light of the foregoing, I wish to use this medium to express my unreserved gratitude to Brothers Abdulmajid Abdulqadr, Abubakar Kunle and Suleiman Bn Muhammad Salisu Bn Salih, for painstakingly reviewing this book and making useful contributions to it, and also to Brothers Balogun Lukman and Arowona Nurayn for their financial contributions towards the publishing of this work.

I am greatly indebted to Brother Alabi Lanre Yunus and Ustadh Shafih Ozeto for all they have been to me over the years.

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Of course, this list will be deficient without mentioning my dear father, Muhammed Bello I. Oare, who has been a wonderful source of inspiration to me.

To all others whose names are supposed to appear in this list but have not been mentioned due to constraint, I seek their pardon, and I pray Allah, the Most Merciful of all who show mercy, to reward them all with that which money cannot buy, and to endow this little effort with His blessing.

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Foreword

Abu Bilal as he is known, Abu Amatudayyan as he comes to be, Abdulrazaq Bn Bello Bn Oare wrote this book titled: “Now that I have accepted Islaam...”. In it he has done his best to enlighten his readers and draw them closer to Islaam irrespective of their diverse background and originations.

The book is useful and is recommended to: the true seekers of truth whose current religious beliefs are inadequate in providing the spiritual stability of the mind; practicing Muslims who believe in divine guidance and are convinced that their salvation lies in it; and the nominal Muslims who are scared of it and are, day after day, drawing away from it because of lack of knowledge. What these people know of Islaam is not more than what is said or written about Islaam by the enemies of Islaam.

Going through the content of the book, even the disease of hypocrisy emanating from ignorance of the religion and the supremacy of Allah is likely to be cured insha-Allah.

Further more, the author tried to take the reader to the pristine and authentic Islamic sources as far as possible. He drives home his point, while, at the same time, safe guarding the decorum of ethics and scholarship. The book is of course useful to those who have just reverted to Islaam, thereby reconciling themselves with the purpose of their creation, as well as those who want to know about Islaam.

Above all, the author intends, Allah knows best, to protect the Muslim’s faith in an environment that is largely un-Islaamic, having being born and brought up in this kind of environment. And he achieves this by providing knowledge on basic beliefs and teachings of Islaam from the Qur’aan and the Sunnah (apostolic traditions) of Prophet Muhammad (*sall-Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*).

May Allah accept his works and make them beneficial to the generality of mankind. (Ameen)

Suleiman Bn Muhammad Salisu Bn Salih

Ameer (President) Islaamic Propagation Centre,
Warri,

Imam, Petroleum Training Institute (PTI) Jumu'ah
Mosque, Effurun,

Lecturer, Mechanical Engineering Department,
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INTRODUCTION

All praise be to Allah! We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We believe in Him, and on Him we put our trust. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from the evil consequences of our deeds. Anyone Allah guides, none can misguide. And anyone Allah leaves to stray, none can guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah – He is alone and has no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad (S.A.W.)¹ is His servant and Messenger.

It is no longer news that Islaam is the fastest growing religion in the world today. People from different parts of the world, including Africa, Europe, North and South America, and Eastern and Southern Asia, are entering into the fold of Islaam in multitudes. However, some of these new reverts enter into Islaam with the wrong beliefs and practices they had in their pre-Islaamic days, and do not know the true meaning of Islaam, what responsibilities lie on them upon accepting Islaam, and the implications of accepting Islaam. This book is, therefore, meant to serve as a guide to the new Muslims; explaining, succinctly, the doctrines, ethics, and rituals of Islaam, the implications of accepting Islaam, and the fundamental duties and responsibilities of a Muslim.

However, as Islaam does not have separate creed for new and old Muslims, this book will, Insha-Allah, serve as a source of spiritual light and fragrance to the entire Muslim Nation.

I lay no claims to scholarship. In writing this book, I have relied extensively on the works of some notable scholars, like Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, Sayyid Abul ‘Ala Mawdudi, sheikh Abdullah Faisal, Muhammad Abdul-Rauf, etc., and in some cases I

¹ Sall-Allahu ‘alayhi wa sallam – Meaning: Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him.

have lifted whole passages from their works for lack of a better expression.

I pray Allah, the Most Merciful of all who show mercy, to endow this work with His blessing, and make it purely for His sake. And may He bless us all with the knowledge and understanding of Islaam. Ameen!

*O Lord! Praise be to You as is befitting the Majesty of Your Countenance
and Magnificence of Your Authority.*

*“Our Lord! Accept this service from us: For Thou art the All-Hearing the
All-Knowing.”*

*“Our Lord! Grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter. And save
us from the torment of the Fire!”*

*Our Lord! Pour out constancy on us and make our steps firm: Help us
against those who reject faith.”*

*“Our Lord! Perfect our light for us, and grant us forgiveness: For thou hast
power over all things.”*

Ameen!

Abu Bilaal Abdulrazaq bn Bello bn Oare

15th Jumaada Thaani, 1428 AH

30th June, 2007.

CHAPTER ONE

ISLAAM, THE RELIGION OF GOD

Every sensible mind that ponders upon the creation, its vastness and complexities, would understand that it couldn't have been in existence without a Fashioner, a Perfect Designer, and, indeed, a Creator behind it. From the suspension of the sky without visible pillars, the alternation of night and day, the solar system and the ecological system, to the entire universe encompassing both the existential and the cosmos, there are manifest testimonies to this fact. To think otherwise is as ludicrous and preposterous as to think that a car (a Mercedes Benz for example), with all its complexities, can exist without a maker behind it. Therefore, common sense tells us that there must be a creator behind this vast and complex universe.

To those who deny the existence of the Creator, a single verse from the Qur'aan refutes their false claim. Allah, the Exalted and Most High, says:

“Were they created from nothing, or did they create themselves?”

[Surah at-Tur (52): 35]

The first part of the question, “Were they created from nothing”, draws our attention to the fact that something cannot exist out of nothing. That is to say, nothing cannot produce something. Therefore, for everything that exists there must be something that brought it forth into existence.

The second part of the question, “...or did they create themselves?”, takes us back to the first, i.e. for man to create himself, then he must first not exist. And as we have already

established above, nothing cannot produce something. Thus it is both logical and rational that God (the Creator) exists, and He is the Creator of mankind and all that exists.

Now the question arises: “Why was man created?” Was man created in vain – just to come into the world, eat, drink, sleep, and eventually die? Was God (God forbid) bored so He decided to keep Himself busy by creating man? Was man created for pastime? The answers to these questions are repeated “NOs”. Allah, Glorified and Most High, says in the Glorious Qur’aan:

“We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them (including mankind) for a (mere) play.”

[Surah al-Anbiya’ (21): 16]

This is clear evidence that man was created for a purpose, which he must achieve in order to be fulfilled. This purpose, if not revealed, will not make sense and may never be achieved. And in the end, man would claim ignorance as an excuse for not fulfilling the purpose for which he was created. That is why Allah, in His infinite Wisdom, disclosed to man the purpose for which he was created. He, Exalted be His Majesty, says:

“And I (Allah) created not the jinn² and mankind except that they should worship me (Alone).”

[Surah ad-Dhariyat (51): 56]

This means the sole purpose for which man was created is to worship Allah, the Creator. The knowledge of this fact gives rise to yet another important question: “How should we worship our Creator?” Should every man follow his own judgement of right and wrong? That would lead to chaos on the earth, because what may be fair and just in one man’s understanding may be a grave injustice in another man’s understanding. Some people for

² Jinn: A creation, created by Allah from fire, like human beings from dust, and angels from light.

example, do not see anything wrong in fornication as long as there is mutual consent of the parties involved.³ They only consider it an aberration when one party is forced into it (as in the case of rape). Some people, too, find no qualms in a man taking another man to the church, for a bishop (the likes of Robinson Gene⁴) to join them together in matrimony. This is just a tip of the iceberg when it comes to discussing how perverse the people of the world are. To others whose brains have not been rumbled, these acts mentioned above (fornication and homosexuality) are considered grave sins. There are many more examples of cases in which people's judgement between right and wrong conflicts. Therefore, if every man was to worship God the way he deems proper or the way he likes, then there will be total chaos in the society, for what one man may see as a rewarding act may be seen as an offence, a condemnable act, and a punishable act by another man. It is to avoid such conflicts and chaos that God Almighty sent noble men in the form of Prophets and Messengers to show mankind The Straight Path that leads to eternal bliss. The duties of these prophets and messengers include enlightening man about the DOs and DONTs of the Creator, teaching him the correct mode of worship, and establishing the religion of God on earth.

However, as we all know too well, there are a thousand and one religions in the world today. Each one claims to be the true religion. But God Almighty is not the author of confusion. He is not a God that will send one message to a people and send a contrary message to another people. If all the religions in the world

³I have had discussions with some members of The Grail Message (a religious group) who hold this opinion.

⁴ An Anglican homosexual bishop (elected Saturday June 8, 2003) who is renowned for his homosexuality. Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson is the first openly homosexual bishop of his denomination (Anglican), and has angered traditionalist Anglicans by suggesting in one of his speeches that Jesus Christ might have been homosexual.

were uniform in their creed and practices, then there would have been no problem in accepting that they are all of God. But on the contrary, as many as the religions in the world today, no two are identical. They all differ in their doctrines and practices, which mean there cannot be more than one True Religion. How then do we identify the True Religion? Quite a simple task it is! The true religion must be unique, and for all times and for all nations. It must be the same religion preached and practised by all the prophets of God from Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, down to Jesus Christ and Muhammad (Blessings and peace be upon them all.) Someone may ask: “Which religion is that?” Is it Christianity? No! It couldn’t have been. Christianity was totally non-existent during the time of Noah, Abraham, Moses, and other prophets that came earlier than Christ Jesus (peace be upon him). In fact, Christianity was born in Antioch by Paul and Barnabas, after Christ Jesus had departed this earth⁵, which means there had been an already existing religion that was practised and preached by the past prophets, including Christ himself (peace be upon him). Interestingly, the same condition that disqualifies Christianity from being the True religion, also disqualifies every other religion e.g. Judaism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Sikhism, etc., from being the True Religion. They were all formed by men, long after many prophets of God had come and gone, and as we have said earlier, the True Religion must be for all times. Once again, how then do we identify this True Religion? Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: “The prophets of God are brothers and their religion is one”⁶. Therefore, the true religion must be the religion of the prophets of God i.e. the religion that contains the message that was preached by all the prophets and messengers of God, from the first of them (Adam) to the last of them (Muhammad), as they were all from one source. Dear reader, you may now ask: “What was the message the prophets of God

⁵ See Acts 16:11 in the Bible.

⁶ Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim.

preached?" The answer is not far fetched! They all preached the worship of One God, and renunciation of false deities. This, in the Arabic language, is expressed by the phrase: *Laa ilaaha illa-llah* (meaning: none has the right to be worshipped except Allah). Simply put, the prophets of God all preached total submission of man's will to the will of God, the Supreme and Most High. And that in the Arabic language is called *ISLAAM*.

Islaam, therefore, means total submission to the will of Allah, in order to bring man at peace with His Creator. It is the religion ordained by God, and practiced by all His prophets. Allah, Glorified and Most High, says in the Glorious Qur'aan:

"Truly, the religion with Allah is Islaam. Those who were given the scripture (Jews and Christians) did not differ except, out of mutual jealousy, after knowledge had come to them. And whoever disbelieves in the *Ayat* (proofs, evidences, signs and revelations) of Allah, then Allah is swift in calling to account."

[Surah al-Imran (3): 19]

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

[Surah al-Imran (3): 85]

It is worthy of note that except for Islaam, every other religion in the world takes its name or appellation from its founder or birthplace, or its immediate environment. For example, Christianity was named after Christ (its alleged founder), Zoroastrianism after Zoroaster, Buddhism after Gautama Buddha, Hinduism after the Hindu tribe, etc. But Islaam wasn't named after any body, nor was it named after any tribe or place. It is a unique religion chosen by Allah Himself for the salvation of mankind.

Allah, Exalted be His Majesty, says:

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islaam as your religion.”

[Surah al-Ma‘idah (5): 3]

CHAPTER TWO

ENTERING INTO THE FOLD OF ISLAAM

After having sure conviction about the authenticity and originality of Islaam, and its superiority over every other religion, it becomes incumbent on one to accept Islaam as one's religion and way of life. Anything short of this, translates into an act of rebellion against Allah, the Lord of mankind and all that exists. Indeed such is the case of anyone who willfully disregards the truth.

Entering into Islaam is quite a simple process. It requires no slaughtering, sacrifice, or secret initiation. All it requires is to proclaim ones belief with the tongue by simply saying:

“Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illa-llah
Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasulullah”

Meaning: “I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.” This testimony is known as the *Shahaadah*.

In other words, a person accepting Islaam is only required to testify to the Lordship and Supremacy of Allah over all creation, and the Prophethood and Messengership of Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him.

The Bath of Entering Into Islaam

After the proclamation of faith, the new entrant into Islaam is expected to take a ritual bath to cleanse himself of disbelief and sin. This bath is known as “*Ghuslu Dukhul-Islaam*.” (Meaning: the bath of entering into Islaam).

How to Take the Bath of Entering Into Islaam

There are only two major conditions required in this bath:

1. *The Intention* – Actions, the Prophet (S.A.W)⁷ said, are judged according to the intentions behind them. Therefore, one has to make the intention of taking a bath to cleanse himself of disbelief and sin, and enter into Islaam. It should be noted that the place of the intention is the heart. It doesn't have to be stated in an audible voice, as this would be tantamount to *bid'ah*⁸.
2. *Washing All Bodily Parts* – The most important condition in this aspect is to ensure that the water touches all parts of the body, as well as the hair on the body and the skin under the hair. However, a full perfect ghusl⁹ may be performed as follows:
 - a. Begin with the name of Allah by reciting “Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Rahim”.
 - b. Wash the hands three times from the fingertips up to and including the wrists.
 - c. Wash the private parts clean.
 - d. Make a complete *wudhu* (ablution) like the one made for Salaah (prayer)¹⁰.
 - e. Wash the head up to and including the neck three times.
 - f. Then wash the whole body at least once, starting from the right part, using clean water for each wash. The upper part of the body should be washed first, then the lower part.

⁷ An abbreviation of Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (meaning, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)

⁸ An innovation that has no basis in Islaam.

⁹ Ritual bath.

¹⁰ Turn to page 61 of this book to see how to perform the ablution.

After taking this bath, a person becomes as free from all ceremonial impurities. He is thereafter expected not to turn back to his former evil ways.

Choosing an Islaamic Name

An Islaamic name refers to a name that has a good meaning, judging by the Qur'aan and Sunnah¹¹. That is, a name which does not violate the Islaamic doctrine. It is important for every Muslim to bear good (Islaamic) names. It helps for easy identification, and the name you bear has a spiritual and psychological effect on you. More so, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said that every man would be called by his name on the day of Judgement. Giving an Islaamic name is one of the rights of a Muslim child. However, the new Muslim is under no obligation to change his or her former name, be it Christian or otherwise, as long as it does not contain an unislaamic meaning. For example, a boy bearing the name "Jolly" or "Samson"¹² may not change his name upon accepting Islaam. Same thing goes for a girl bearing a name like "Patience" or "Rose". But as for a boy bearing a name like Dennis¹³ or a girl bearing a name like Lynda¹⁴, Cynthia, or Diana¹⁵, such names are clearly unislaamic and as such must be changed upon entering into Islaam. It is preferable however to bear names that sounds clearly Islaamic (like Abdullah, Muhammad, Sulayman, Faatimah, Aishah, etc.) as it gives a sense of belonging, and serves as an Islaamic identity.

On a general note, however, it is allowable for a Muslim, whether new or old, to change his or her first name, especially if they were

¹¹ Sunnah refers to the prophetic traditions of Muhammad (S.A.W.). It includes his sayings, deeds and tacit approvals.

¹² Meaning: Brightness.

¹³ Meaning: god of wine.

¹⁴ Meaning: Serpent.

¹⁵ The names Cynthia and Diana have the same meaning – moon goddess.

too assuming, negative or unislaamic. This was reported to be the practice of prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). It is reported that one of the prophet's wives was originally named Barrah (Pious) and he changed it to Zainab, as Allah says: "Do not ascribe piety to yourselves for He (Allah) knows best who is pious."¹⁶ The cousin of prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), ibn Abbas, also reported that another of the prophet's wives was also named Barrah and he changed it to Juwayreeyah. Abdullah ibn Umar, a disciple of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), reported that his father, Umar, had a daughter named Aasiyah (Disobedient) whom the Prophet (S.A.W.) renamed Jameelah (Beautiful)¹⁷.

Likewise, Yoruba names like Ogunbowale¹⁸, Shangodeyi¹⁹, Odutola²⁰, and all such names that are associated with false gods are strictly prohibited in Islaam, as they negate the fundamental belief in the Oneness of Allah (*Tawhid*)²¹.

Whereas a person is allowed to change his or her first name, he/she is not allowed to change his/her surname, regardless of how unislaamic they may be. This is so as to preserve the person's lineage and determine who his relatives are in order to avoid incestuous marriage, discharge inheritance rights, and fulfill general responsibilities to blood relations. As an advice, new Muslims should try to adopt the Islaamic naming system, and not erase their family names upon accepting Islaam; this creates ill feelings among their non-Muslim families, which could easily have been avoided. It is reported that Allah's Messenger never changed the names of people's fathers, no matter how unislaamic they were. For example, the Companion of the Prophet, Abu

¹⁶ Surah an-Najm (53): 32

¹⁷ Related by Muslim.

¹⁸ Ogun, the god of thunder comes home.

¹⁹ Shango, the god of thunder, has manifested into this.

²⁰ Odu, the ifa oracle, is sufficient for us.

²¹ Islaamic monotheism.

Salamah, had his name changed to Abdullah ibn Abdul-Asad, leaving his fathers name, Abdul-Asad (Servant of the lion) unchanged²².

It can therefore be deduced that Islaam disapproves of erasing ones family name, as this is against the spirit of Islaam. The fathers first and last name should be retained, and should the father be unknown, the mothers first and last name should follow the Muslims given or chosen name.²³

²² Ibn al-Jawzee Sifatus-Safwah, vol. 1, p. 685. Quoted in Tafseer Surah al-Buruj, by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips.

²³ For details on the Islaamic naming system, see the above quoted book by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, p. 112.

CHAPTER THREE

MEANING AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE SHAHAADAH

The Shahaadah is a confessional statement by which a Muslim witnesses that nothing in the heavens or on the earth or anywhere else deserves to be worshiped except Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger. The formula reads as follows:

Ash-hadu an la ilaaha illallah
Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasulullah

The first part of the shahaadah means: “I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah”. The revealed scripture of Islaam, the Qur’aan, is like a vast commentary on this simple statement, drawing from it all its implications for human life and thought. It implies that there can be no power, force or agency in the heavens or on earth which is independent of God. Everything that exists and everything that happens is subject to His control; there is nothing that can compete with Him or that escapes His grasp, nothing that does not bear witness to His creative power and majesty. He is the uncaused cause of all that exists. “The seven heavens and the earth, and all that is therein praise Him”, says the Qur’aan. There is nothing comparable unto Him.

This first part of the Shahaadah has two main components: Negation and Affirmation. The Negation refers to rejecting faith in all false deities (i.e. denouncing all false gods), while the affirmation refers to accepting the Lordship and Supremacy of the One and only true God, and His uniqueness in His Essence.

Allah, Glorified and Most High, says:

“There is no compulsion in Religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieve in Taghut²⁴, and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trust worthy handhold that will never break and Allah is All-Hearer, All-knower”.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 256]

He, Most Gracious, also says:

“Allah bears witness that none has the right to be worshipped but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in justice. None has the right to be worshipped but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise”.

[surah al-Imran (3): 18]

A person who recites this first part of the Shahaadah must believe in the four branches of *Tawhid*²⁵. That is, Allah is the only Lord (Rububiyah), He alone has the right to be worshiped (Ululhiya), to Him belongs the most beautiful names and attributes (Asma wa Sifat), and He is the supreme law-giver (Hakimiya).

The second part of the shahaadah (And I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah) means Muhammad is the vehicle with which Allah conveys his divine will and guidance to mankind. It implies that Muhammad, son of Abdullah (S.A.W.)²⁶ has been sent by Allah as a messenger inviting all mankind to the true religion (Islam), from the first day of his blessed mission till the resurrection. When a Muslim recites this second part of the

²⁴ Taghut means anything worshipped or given reverence and obeisance other than the real God (Allah). That is, all false deities including Satan, Devils, idols, stones, sun, stars, angels, human beings, local traditions, customs, norms, values, wealth, fame, etc.

²⁵ Islaamic monotheism.

²⁶ Abbreviation for Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (meaning: blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

shahaadah, he is simply saying he submits to the guidance and leadership of Muhammad (S.A.W.).

Allah says in the Glorious Qur'aan:

“Say (O Muhammad to mankind): ‘If you (really) love Allah then follow me. Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful’.

[Surah al-Imran (3): 31]

The following implication can be deduced from the second part of the Shahaadah:

1. Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.
2. He was the last of all the prophets and messengers of Allah.

Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, says:

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets”.

[Surah al-Ahzab (33): 40]

The Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him said:

“My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me, is that of a man who has built a house nicely and beautifully, except for a place of one brick in a corner. The people go about it and wonder at its beauty, but say: ‘Would that this brick be put in its place!’ So I am that brick, and I am the last of the Prophets.”

[Bukhari]²⁷

The house refers to the *Deen* (the religion of Islaam), and the prophet, Muhammad (S.A.W.) came to fulfill the message that

²⁷ The name/names in square brackets after each hadith is quoted refer to the recorder/recorders of the hadith.

started before him. Therefore, whoever believes that there is a prophet after Muhammad (S.A.W.) is a *Kaafir* (disbeliever) because he opposes Allah's Book (the Qur'aan), and Prophet Muhammad's teaching.

3. He was the best of all the prophets of Allah. To this fact the prophet (S.A.W.) said:

"I will be the noblest son of Adam on the Day of Judgment and this is not to boast."²⁸

The Prophet (S.A.W.) also said:

"I have been given five (things) which were not given to anyone else before me:

- a. Allah made me victorious by awe, (by His frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey.*
- b. The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and a thing to purify (perform Tayammum²⁹), therefore any one of my followers can pray wherever he is, at the time of prayer.*
- c. The booty has been made Halaal (lawful) to me yet it was not lawful to anyone before me.*
- d. I have been given the right of intercession (on the day of Resurrection).*
- e. Every prophet used to be sent to his nation only, but I was sent to all mankind"*

[Bukhari]

4. A person who professes the Shahaadah has to love the prophet more than everyone else including himself.

Allah, Most Gracious, says concerning this:

²⁸

²⁹ Dry ablution with the use of sand or dust.

“The prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers (as regards respect and marriage)”.

[Surah al-Ahzab (33): 6]

The Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind.”

[Bukhari]

A *sahabah*³⁰ of the Prophet named Abdullah ibn Hisham narrated:

“We were with the Prophet (S.A.W.) and he was holding the hand of Umar ibn Al-Khattab. Umar said to him, “O Allah’s messenger! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self.” The prophet (S.A.W.) said: ‘No, by Him in whose hand my soul is, (you will not have complete faith) till I am dearer to you than your own self’. Then Umar said to him, ‘Now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self.’ The prophet (S.A.W.) then said, ‘Now, O Umar, (now you are a true believer)”.

[Bukhari]

Every sincere Muslim must submit to the leadership and guidance of Muhammad (S.A.W.) by emulating him and practicing his teachings as contained in the *Ahadith*³¹. A Muslim is enjoined to take, whole-heartedly, whatever the prophet gives him (i.e. permits him) and abstain completely from whatever he prohibits him.

Allah, Glorified and Most High, says:

³⁰ Literary: Companion. It is a term usually used to describe the believers who met Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in his life time.

³¹ Singular: Hadith: The collections of the sayings, and prophetic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). It is also Referred to as the Sunnah.

“And whatsoever the messenger (Muhammad S.A.W.) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).

[Surah al-Hashr (59): 7]

“He who obeys the messenger (Muhammad S.A.W.), has indeed obeyed Allah...”

[Surah an-Nisa (4): 80]

“It is not allowed for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His messenger have decreed a matter that they should have an option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error”.

[Surah al-Ahzab (33):36]

Just as a worldly person may love a particular footballer or musician to the extent that he emulates him, wears his hair style, dresses like him and behaves like him, so also a Muslim is expected to show his sincere love for prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) by emulating him in every aspect of his life, including his character and appearance. To this effect Allah, the Almighty, says:

“You have indeed in the messenger of Allah (Muhammad S.A.W.) a good example to emulate, for him who hopes for (the meeting with) Allah and the last Day, and remember Allah much”.

[Surah al-Ahzab (33): 21]

Only such rightly directed love can truly strengthen one’s faith in Islaam.

A Muslim believes that Almighty Allah revealed the Glorious Qur’aan to His Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad (S.A.W.), and He (Allah) also taught him the blessed apostolic tradition known as

the *Sunnah*. Therefore, the Qur'aan and *Sunnah* are considered as the sources of guidance for the Muslims.

For a person's testimony of faith (*Shahaadah*) to be authentic, the following three aspects have to be fulfilled.

1. *Conviction of the heart* – That is, the *Shahaadah* has to be firmly entrenched in the heart without any doubt or resentment.
2. *Declaration with the tongue* – After having full conviction and firm belief in the heart that nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allah and Muhammad is his messenger, then it has to be proudly proclaimed with the tongue.
3. *Implementation with the limbs* – This is achieved by practically obeying the laws of Allah, carrying out His commandments and abstaining from His prohibitions, in conformity with the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (*sall-Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

CHAPTER FOUR

CONDITIONS OF THE SHAHAADAH³²

For a Muslim to attain true faith and fulfill the will of his creator, he has to know, understand and strictly adhere to the conditions of the Shahaadah. This will guarantee him a better understanding of the religion and his relationship with his Lord and Cherisher.

We shall discuss these conditions of the Shahaadah in the following pages in fair details.

First Condition of Shahaadah (Knowledge)

Knowledge of the meaning of Islaam is the first condition of the Shahaadah. When a person recites the Shahaadah he has to understand what he is reciting, its meaning, and its implications. For this reason, a person may not be tricked or coerced into accepting Islaam. Rather it has to be on sure knowledge.

Allah, the Most High, says in the Glorious Qur'aan:

“Know, therefore, that there is no god but Allah, and ask forgiveness for thy fault, and for the men and women who believe: for Allah knows how ye move about and how ye dwell in your homes.)”

[Surah Muhammad (47):19]

³² Culled from a lecture by sheikh Abdullah Faisal (May Allah preserve him).

Second Condition of Shahaadah (Certainty of Faith)

Dear brothers and sisters in Islaam, the second condition of the shahaadah is that your faith in the Islamic creed and practices must be sure and unwavering. To waiver in your faith implies doubt in the teachings of Islaam and therefore nullifies your Shahaadah. A Muslim must be sure about the existence of only One God who is the supreme disposer of the affairs of the universe, he must be sure about the existence of the angels of Allah, the revealed books, the messengers of Allah, and the last day (Judgment Day). He must also have sure belief in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof. In this regard Allah says:

“The true believers are only those who believe in Allah and His messenger (Muhammad S.A.W.), and thereafter entertain no doubt at all. Rather they strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allah. Such are the truthful ones.”

[Surah al-Hujuraat (49): 15]

Therefore, if a person says, for example: “hell fire is not real, after all who has seen it before or who has gone there and come back to bear witness to its reality?” such a person becomes automatically outside the fold of Islaam. Certainty of faith, in a nutshell, means you must be fully convinced about the authenticity of the Islamic creed.

Third Condition of Shahaadah (Inward and Outward Acceptance)

The third condition necessary for the Shahaadah to be authentic is that it has to be accepted both inwardly and outwardly. That is to say, the shahaadah has to be from the heart, not by compulsion or circumstances (like wining a lady’s heart for marriage, or pleasing a boss in order for one to retain his job or gain promotion). There

is, however, no barrier to one who wants to accept Islaam under such conditions, as true faith can be obtained with further understanding of the religion. But, essentially, the belief in the unique oneness of Allah and the messengership of Muhammad (*Sall-Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has to originate sincerely from the heart and be proclaimed outwardly, both by sayings and deeds.

Fourth Condition of Shahaadah (Complete submission to Qur'aan and Sunnah)

A person who takes the shahaadah must surrender his life totally to be regulated by the Qur'aan and Sunnah of the prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). These two sources of divine guidance (the Qur'aan and Sunnah) become his criteria for judging between right and wrong, lawful and unlawful, permitted and prohibited. Anything that goes contrary to the Qur'aan and Sunnah must be rejected and discarded. Such things may come in the guise of local traditions, customs, norms, or values. In whatever way it comes, when a person accepts Islam he automatically gets a new set of traditions, customs, norms, values etc. The shariah, which is the complete code of conduct of a Muslim, as dictated by the Qur'aan and Sunnah of the prophet (S.A.W.), becomes his guiding principles. For example, in some parts of Edo State of Nigeria, rabbit is considered prohibited. It is the belief in those places that whoever eats the meat of rabbit will have his nose chopped off, because rabbit saved their ancestor. If a person from such a place embraces Islaam, it becomes incumbent on him/her to give up such beliefs because Allah becomes his supreme lawgiver. And whoever prohibits what Allah has permitted, or permits what Allah has prohibited, becomes a disbeliever. He is by such action challenging Allah in His *Hakimiyah* (sole prerogative of law-making). In this regard Allah says in His Glorious book:

“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the *Kaafiroon* (disbelievers)”.

[Surah al-Ma‘idah (5): 44]

He, Glorified and Most High, also says:

“Is not Allah the best of Judges?”

[Surah at-Tin (95): 8]

Of course Allah is the best of Judges and His laws supersede every other law.

Complete submission to Qur’aan and Sunnah also means that a person cannot practice some pillars of Islaam and leave off others, or believe in some of the teachings of Islaam and disbelieve in others. During the caliphacy of Abu Bakr, some Muslims refused to pay the *zakah* (alms task), yet they believed in Allah and His messenger, and they observed the *salaah* (prayer). They argued that they pay *zakah* only to the Prophet (S. A.W.) and since he is gone, and Abu Bakr is not a Prophet, then that obligation is lifted from them. Abu Bakr treated them as disbelievers and fought them. Allah, Blessed and Most High, Says:

“Then do you believe in a part of the scripture and reject the rest? Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment”.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 85]

He, Most Gracious, says again:

“O you who believe! Enter into Islaam completely [and perfectly] and follow not the footsteps of Satan. Verily! He is to you a plain enemy”.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2):208]

The implication of the above verses of the Qur'aan is that a person is not allowed to have one foot in Islaam and the other foot outside Islaam. For example, one cannot be a Muslim, and at the same time celebrate Christmas or Easter or valentine, nor can he celebrate democracy day.

Prophet Muhammad, blessing and peace be upon him, said:

“He who imitates any people (in their actions) is considered to be one of them.”

[Abu Dawud]

Similarly, one cannot be a Muslim, and at the same time practice tribalism, nationalism or racism.

Fifth Condition of Shahaadah (Rejection of All Shades of Falsehood)

A Muslim must reject all systems other than Islaam. Islaam has got no alternative. Every system other than the one ordained by Allah is sheer falsehood, and must be condemned and rejected. This condemnation undermines the label such system may carry: be it racism, tribalism, nationalism, democracy, capitalism, Christianity, Judaism, socialism, Hinduism, etc. In this regard Allah, Exalted and Most High, says:

“And fight them until there is no more *fitnah*³³, and all religion is for Allah Alone (in the whole of the world)”.

[Surah al-Anfal (8): 39]

Sixth Condition of Shahaadah (Singularity of Devotion)

The shahaadah mandates every Muslim to avoid all forms of shirk. Shirk basically means polytheism. It implies ascribing partners to

³³ Tumult, oppression, polytheism, disbelief, etc.

Allah or ascribing divine attributes to others besides Allah and believing that the source of power, harm and blessing comes from others besides Allah. Allah, Glorified and Most High, says concerning this unpardonable sin:

“Verily, Allah will not forgive those who associate partners (other gods) with Him in worship; but He will forgive whom He will for other sins. He that associates other gods with Him is guilty of a heinous sin”.

[Surah an-Nisa (4): 48]

He, the Exalted in Might, also says:

“... let him that hopes for the meeting with his Lord work righteousness and associate none as partner in the worship of his Lord”.

[Surah al-Kahf (18):110]

There are three major manifestations of shirk, namely:

1. Ash-Shirk-al-Akbar, i.e. major shirk
2. Ask-Shirk-al-Asghar, i.e. minor shirk
3. Ask-Shirk-al-Khafi, i.e. inconspicuous shirk.

These three major manifestation of shirk are explained as follows:

1. Ash-Shirk-al-Akbar: This is the major and serious form of polytheism. It has four aspects, namely:

- a. *Shirk-ad-Dua (Inovocation)* – This aspect implies invoking, supplicating or praying to other deities besides Allah. Allah alone is the Lord and Cherisher of the entire universe and to Him alone all acts of worship must be directed.

The noble prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“Ad-Du’aa (supplication) is ‘Ibaadah (worship)”.

[Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, and Ibn Maajah]

Since Du'aa (supplication/Invocation) is an act of worship, and we have established clearly above that to Allah alone is due all worship, then Du'aa too must be directed only to Allah. To this effect Allah, Blessed and Most High, says:

“And when they embark on a ship they invoke Allah, making their faith pure for Him only. But when He brings them safely to land, behold they give a share of their worship to others”.

[Surah al-Ankabut (29): 65]

- b. *Shirk-an-Niyyah wal-Iradah wal-Qasd* – This aspect implies intentions, purpose and determination in acts of worship or religious deeds not for the sake of Allah, but directed towards other deities.

Allah, Exalted be His Majesty, says:

“Whoever desires the life of the world and its glitter, to them We shall pay in full (the wages of) their deeds therein, and they will have no diminution therein. They are those for whom there is nothing in the hereafter but fire; and vain are the deeds they did therein. And of no effect is that which they used to do.”

[Hud (11): 15-16]

- c. *Shirk-at-Ta'ah* – This aspect implies rendering obedience to any authority against the order of Allah. Allah says in the Glorious Qur'aan:

“They (Jews and Christians) took their Rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah), and (they also took as their

lord) messiah, son of Maryam (Mary), while they (Jews and Christian) were commanded (in the Torah and the Gospel) to worship none but one God (Allah). None has the right to be worshipped but He. Glory is to Him (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with him).

[Surah at-Tawbah (9): 31]

Once while Allah's messenger (S.A.W.) was reciting the above verse, a companion of his named Adi ibn Hatim, who was once a Christian, said: "O Allah's Prophet! They do not worship them (the rabbis and monks)." Allah's messenger said they certainly do. They (i.e. the Rabbis and Monks) made legal things illegal, and illegal things legal, and they (i.e. the Jews and Christians) followed them; and by doing so they really worshipped them."³⁴

The prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

"There is no obedience to a creature, in disobedience of the creator."

- d. *Shirk-al-Mahabbah* –This implies showing the love which is due only to Allah to others than him.

Allah, Exalted be His Majesty, says:

"And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah. But those who believe love Allah more (than anything else). If only those who do wrong could see, when they will see the torment, that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment".

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 165]

³⁴ Narrated by Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, and ibn Jarir.

- 2. Ash-Shirk-al-Asghar (The minor shirk):** This refers to acts performed to show off (Ar-Riya). Any act of worship or any religious deed done in order to gain praise, fame, or for worldly benefit, falls under this category.

Allah, Exalted and Most High, says:

“Say (O Muhammad (S.A.W): ‘I am only a man like you, it has been revealed to me that your God is one God (i.e. Allah). So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate non as a partner in the worship of his Lord”.

[Surah al-kahf (18): 110]

- 3. Ash-Shirk-al-khafi (the inconspicuous shirk):** This type implies being inwardly dissatisfied with the inevitable condition that has been ordained for one by Allah; conscientiously lamenting that had you done or not done such and such, or had you approached such and such, you would have had a better status, etc.

The noble Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said:

“Ash-shirk-al-khafi in the Muslim nation is more inconspicuous than the creeping of a black ant on black rock in the pitch-darkness of the night. And this inconspicuous shirk is expiated by saying thrice the following sentences every day: ‘O Allah! I take your refuge from that I should ascribe anything as partner in Your worship, being conscious of that, and I beg Your pardon for that sin which I am not aware of’.”

And he, blessings and peace be upon him, advised thus:

“If anything afflicts you do not say, ‘If I had done such and such things, such and such would have happened.’

For (the utterance) 'If I had', provides an opening for the deeds of the devil."

[Muslim]

**Seventh Condition of Shahaadah
(Loving and Hating for the Sake of Allah)**

When a person declares for Islaam, it means he has surrendered himself to be guided in thoughts, speeches, and actions by the will of Allah. His likes and dislikes now go in line with the will of Allah. Whatever he loves, he loves for the pleasure of Allah and because Allah has sanctioned that thing. And whatever he hates, he hates for fear of Allah's wrath or because Allah hates that thing. Likewise, his loyalty or disloyalty to anything on the surface of the earth or anywhere else in the universe is guided by the will of Allah. Whoever attains this height experiences the sweetness of faith.

The prophet, blessing and peace be upon him, said:

"None of you truly believes until his desires goes in line with what I came with".

[Hadith 41 of Imam An-Nawawi]

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ISLAAMIC CREED

The word creed means a set of principles or religious beliefs. To be a Muslim, you have to believe in Allah, His angels (*Malaikah*), His Books, his messengers (*Rusulallah*), the Last Day (*Yawmuddin* – Day of Judgment), the supremacy of the divine will (*Al-Qadar*). These six fundamental elements of the Islamic creed are also referred to as the six articles of faith (*Eemaan*). They are explained as follows:

A. First Element: The Belief in Allah

A Muslim believes that Almighty Allah is the Creator of the universe and all that exists within it. He created all things with His power and will and perfected everything wisely. And Allah is One, Unique and Eternal. He has no partner or equal, and He has power over all things.

We Muslims learn about Allah from His Glorious Book (the Qur’aan) and from the noble prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, says in the Qur’aan:

“And your God is one God! There is none who has the right to be worshipped but He, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 163]

Allah, Glorified and Most High, also says:

“Say: He is Allah, the One. Allah the Eternal Refuge (on whom all depend). He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him”.

[Surah al-Ikhlaas (112): 1-4]

“Allah, none has the right to be worshiped but He, the Ever Living, the one Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belong whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows what happens to them (his creatures) in this world and what will happen to them in the hereafter. And they will never compass anything of His knowledge except that which He will. His *kursi* (chair or footstool) extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, The Most Great.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 255]

“All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Allah and he is the Mighty, the Wise. His is the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He ordains life and death and has power over all things. He is the First and the Last and the Inward and the Outward. He has knowledge of all things.”

[Surah al-Hadid (57): 1 – 4]

See also Surahs al-Qasas (28): 88, al-Baqarah (2): 117 and ash-Shura (42): 11.

B. Second Element: Belief in the Angels of Allah

The angels are numerous invisible beings in charge of the execution of the command and decrees of Allah. They have been created from light. They obey Allah carry out His will and have no free will. The best known of the angels is Jibril (Gabriel), who was in charge of bringing revelations from Allah to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and other prophets.

Other angels record our deeds or carryout other functions. Three other eminent angels are; Mikail (in charge of the rain), Israfil (in charge of blowing the trumpet at the end of the world) and Malakul-maot (in charge of taking away life at the time of death).

C. Third Element: Belief in the Books of Allah

The third element of *iman* (faith) is the belief in the sacred books. Allah revealed books of guidance through His prophets. Muslims believe in all the books of Allah, and the most sacred and sacrosanct of them all is the Qur'aan, the eternal word of Allah which was revealed to Muhammad (S.A.W). The Qur'aan is the only book of Allah which exists unchanged in its original form. The other books are not in their original languages, and are distorted and adulterated with human words. The early Muslims recorded the Qur'aan as soon as it was revealed and memorized it by heart. And from then it has been transmitted, unadulterated, from generation to generation up till this day. The Qur'aan will remain sacrosanct and unadulterated till the Day of Resurrection.

Other books of Allah, as mentioned in the Qur'aan, are the Tawrah (Torah of Moses, the Zabur (Psalms of David), the Injil (Gospel of Jesus) and Suhuf of Ibrahim (the scrolls of Abraham). According to the hadith of prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), there are a hundred and four (104) books revealed by Allah³⁵.

D. Fourth Element: Belief in the Messengers of Allah

Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, sent prophets and messengers to guide people aright and make them submit to the will of their Lord and Sustainer. There is no nation to which Allah did not send a messenger.

Allah, Exalted be His Majesty, says:

³⁵ Minhajul-Muslim, by Imam Abubakr al-Jazairy.

“And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghut (all false deities, etc. i.e. do not worship Taghut besides Allah)’

[Surah an-Nahl (16): 36]

“And there never was a nation but a warner had passed among them.”

[Surah al-Faatir (35):24]

Twenty-five prophets are mentioned by name in the Qur’aan. Most of these prophets were also mentioned in the Bible. The names of these prophets as they are mentioned in the Qur’aan and their corresponding Biblical versions are presented in a tabular form as follows:

	Qur'anic Version	Biblical Version
1	Adam	Adam
2	Nuh	Noah
3	Idris	Enoch
4	Ibrahim	Abraham
5	Ismail	Ishmael
6	Ishaaq	Isaac
7	Ya'qub	Jacob
8	Dawud	David
9	Suleiman	Solomon
10	Ayyub	Job
11	Yusuf	Joseph
12	Musa	Moses
13	Harun	Aaron
14	Ilyas	Elias
15	Al-Yasa	Elisha
16	Yunus	Jonah
17	Lut	Lot
18	Hud	No biblical version
19	Shu'aib	Jethro
20	Salih	Saul
21	Dhul-kifl	Ezekiel
22	Zakariyya	Zachariah
23	Yahya	John
24	Isa	Jesus
25	Muhammad	No biblical version

Five of the prophets mentioned above are given the honorific title “*Ulu’l-Azm Minar-Rusul*”, which means messengers of determination and perseverance. They are Muhammad, Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa and Isa (Allah’s blessing and peace be upon them). All prophets and messengers called to only one message, Islaam, i.e., total surrender to the will of Allah, the Lord of mankind and all that exists.

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Mutalib (S.A.W.) is the last³⁶ and the greatest of all the prophets and messengers. No prophet will be raised up after him, and there will be no true and acceptable religion other than Islaam till the Last Day (the Judgment Day).

The prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“The Isrâelis used to be ruled and guided by Prophets. Whenever a Prophet died, another would take over his place. There will be no Prophet after me, but there will be caliphs who will increase in number.”

[Bukhâri]

No Muslim is a true believer if he does not believe in the entire prophets and messengers of Allah, from Adam to Jesus and Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon them all. Allah, in His Glorious Book, the Qur’aan, says:

“The messenger (Muhammad S.A.W) believes in what has been sent down from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say), ‘we make no distinction between one another of His messengers’- and they say, ‘we hear, and we obey. (we seek) Your forgiveness our Lord, and to You is the return (of all)’.”

³⁶ See Surah al-Ahzab (33): 40

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 28]

E. Fifth Element: Belief in the Last Day (Akhirah)

Life on earth is but temporary, and is meant to be a cultivation ground for the life after death (*Alakhirah*). A Muslim believes that Almighty Allah will raise all mankind back to life on the Resurrection Day. Allah is He who has created mankind in the first place so He is capable of resurrecting them back to life.

Allah, the Almighty and All-Wise, says:

“...He says: ‘who will give life to these bones after they are rotten and have become dust?’ Say: (O Muhammad) ‘He will give life to them who created them for the first time! And He is the All-knower of every creation!’ ”

[Surah Ya Sin (36): 78-79]

Death does not mean the end of life. It is only a transition from one stage of life to another. Life has four main stages: the life in the womb, the life of this world, the life in the grave and the life after resurrection. When a man dies, his body decays but his soul remains, and will be brought back to life to account for his deeds. On that day, every one will be presented a book of record. The successful ones will be the pious believers who worked righteous deeds, and they will be rewarded with paradise, which is a garden of eternal bliss underneath which rivers flow. The unsuccessful ones, on the other hand, will be those who did bad deeds, disbelieved the message of Allah and scorned the prophets and the pious scholars. They will be thrown inside the blazing fire wherein they will neither live nor die, but will face severe torment from Allah. And Allah is stern in punishment.

Every one that day shall see his deeds laid bare in the book of records, and none will be wronged.

Allah, the Almighty and All-Wise, says:

“And the book (ones record) will be placed (in the right hand for a believer in the oneness of Allah), and in the left hand for a disbeliever in the oneness of Allah), and you will see the mujrimun (criminals, polytheists, sinners), fearful of that which is (recorded) therein. They will say: woe to us! What sort of book is this that leaves neither a small thing nor a big thing but has recorded it with numbers!” And they will find all that they did, placed before them, and Your Lord treats no one with injustice.”

[Surah al-kahf (18): 49]

F. Sixth Element: Belief in Al-Qadar

Dear brothers and sisters in Islaam, the sixth pillar of the Islaamic creed is the belief in divine pre-ordination. Allah has given man a free will to obey or disobey. Allah knows whether man will obey or disobey, as He is *Al-‘Alim* (the All-knowing). His knowledge encompasses the past, the present and the future. It should be noted, however, that the fact that Allah knows what we are going to do does not mean that we do not have free will. In fact, the belief in fatalism (i.e. the belief that everything is caused by God and man is helpless and without choice) has no basis in Islaam.

CHAPTER SIX

THE QUR'AAN AND THE HADITH

The Qur'aan:

To write about the Qur'aan in its manifold excellence is to dare ones candle to the noon-day sun, as Mir Moazam Husain puts it. Where to begin, where to end? A verse of the Qur'aan readily comes to mind:

“And if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea with seven more seas to help it (were ink), the words of Allah could not be exhausted.”

[Surah Luqman (31): 27]

The Qur'aan is the last testament of God to mankind. It was revealed by Allah (God) through angel Jibril (Gabriel) to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) to lead mankind out of the darkness of ignorance, disbelief and polytheism into the light of belief in the unique Oneness of God and submission to His will. It is the only miracle claimed by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). In the Prophet's words:

“There was no Prophet among the prophets but was given miracles because of which people had belief, but what I have been given is the Divine Revelation (the Qur'aan) which Allah has revealed to me. So I hope that my followers will be more than those of any other Prophet on the Day of Resurrection.”

[al-Bukhari]

The Qur'aan represents Allah's literal words, and it is mandatory on every Muslim to submit wholeheartedly to it without any option or resentment. As Allah Himself describes it, the Qur'aan is a book

wherein there is no doubt, and guidance for the *Muttaqun* (pious believers in Islaamic Monotheism).

Authenticity of the Qur'aan

Unlike every other religious book of authority in the world today, the Qur'aan contains no discrepancy, contradiction nor crookedness.³⁷ There has been no tempering of the text and the original purity of the language has stayed undefiled. Allah challenges the disbelievers to produce a chapter like it if they are in doubt about its authenticity. Says Allah, the Exalted in Might:

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down on Our servant, then produce a Surah (chapter) like it, and call your witnesses besides Allah, if you are truthful. And if you cannot – and of a surety you cannot – then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the unbelievers.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 23-24]

Revelation of the Qur'aan

The Qur'aan was revealed in piecemeal to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) over a period of 23 years. The Book had been recorded in writing before the Prophet's death and many had committed it to memory. The practice of memorizing the Qur'aan has continued since and even in our day the number of those who know it by heart runs into thousands. The fundamental truths of the Qur'aan have stayed in bloom because of their relevance to every age and their unique assimilating capability to the dynamics of changing existence. The Qur'aan is divided into thirty Parts, 114 Chapters, 558 Sections, and 6666 Verses.

Translation of the Qur'aan

³⁷ See Surah an-Nisa (4): 82, al-Kahf (18): 1

The Qur'aan cannot be translated in its essential quality. But for those who cannot read Arabic, renderings in other languages have often been attempted, with varying success. However, the result of any translation is not the Glorious Qur'aan – that inimitable symphony the very sounds of which moves men to tears and ecstasy. Hence, only the Qur'aan in its original Arabic form can be used in *salaah* (prayers). As to the Qur'aan's translations in general, to be frank, they often fail to convey the real sense, spirit, and delicacy of the original. Therefore, only an approximation to the meaning of the Qur'aan can be achieved through translation. Hence, it is compulsory on every Muslim to learn the Qur'aan in its original Arabic language. The Qur'aan is one and has no versions or editions.

Comparative Study of Religious Books

All major religions of the world – Islaam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Confucianism – have got their basic Books and these Books stand as the sole and final authority for the systems of their respective Religions. Of all such Books, the Qur'aan alone claims, and claims definitely and emphatically, to be entirely the word of God, communicated to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) through “*Wahye*” (revelation or inspiration) in origin. Other Books either make no such claim in themselves, but are taken, more or less, to be the Words of God, by implication; or even if they were the Words of God in origin, they are held to have suffered various alterations in Text, or to have been lost and replaced by Memoirs written by disciples themselves.

Again the Qur'aan is available, original, intact, in a living and progressive Arabic language of great refinement and literature, more or less current all the world over, while other Books are found in languages, antique, or even obsolete or even extinct so as to be preserved only in translations, some very far-fetched indeed.

In fact the Qur'aan is ONE BASIC BOOK which is read in original text, on the largest scale in the world.³⁸

The Hadith

The Hadith refers to the collection of sayings, deeds, and Prophetic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). It includes his instructions, tacit approvals, and wise sermons and admonitions. The Hadith explains the Qur'aan, as Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was the vehicle of transmission of the Qur'aan. Without the Hadith, the Qur'aan cannot be well understood. Therefore, protection of the Qur'aan, as Allah has promised, necessitates protection of the Hadith. For this reason Allah blessed the Muslim *ummah* (nation) with the *isnaad* (chain of narrators of a Hadith). With the *isnaad*, the Hadith is protected from corruption, and weak and fabricated Ahadith³⁹ are sifted from sound and authentic ones. Apart from the *ummah* of Muhammad (S.A.W.), no other *ummah* was blessed with *isnaad*. Hence, no other Prophet apart from Muhammad (S.A.W.) had a fully documented life (including his sayings, deeds, character, and disposition).

Allah commands the Muslims, in the Glorious Qur'aan, to obey and follow the Prophet (Muhammad-S.A.W.), ungrudgingly and submissively. Says He, the Blessed and Most High:

“And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad-SAW) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah; verily Allah is Severe in Punishment.”

[Surah al-Hashr (59): 7]

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad-S.A.W.) judge in all disputes

³⁸ Encyclopedia Britannica, 9th Edition.

³⁹ Plural of Hadith.

between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.”

[Surah an-Nisa (4): 65]⁴⁰

The only way we can follow the Prophet (SAW) is by following his numerous authentic Ahadith recorded down in Books of Hadith. The Qur’aan and the Hadith are the two major sources of guidance for the Muslims. He is indeed an unbeliever, destined for Hell-Fire, who does not follow the Qur’aan and the Hadith, or who follows the Qur’aan but refuses to follow the Hadith.

*“And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger
(Muhammad-S.A.W. – by following the Qur’aan and the Hadith), he has
indeed achieved a great victory (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-Fire and
will be admitted to Paradise.”
{Surah al-Ahzab (33) 71}*

⁴⁰ See also surahs Aal-Imran (3):32; an-Nisa (4):60, 81; al-Ahzab (33):22, 34; an-Najm (53):4-5, ash-Shura (42):53, and an-Nur (24):64.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MUHAMMAD, PROPHET OF ISLAAM **(Blessings and Peace of Allah Be On Him)**

Muhammad, the son of Abdullah, the son of Abdul-Muttalib, is the seal of the Prophets, i.e., the Last Prophet (on whom the line of prophethood is closed).⁴¹ He is the Harbinger of Mercy from Allah (God) for all the worlds,⁴² and he confirms all Prophets and their Scriptures.⁴³ He was born on Monday, 12th Rabiul-Awwal, in the year 570 C.E., in Makkah. His father, ‘Abdullah, was the son of Abdul-Muttalib, leader of the Quraysh tribe of Makkah, and his mother, Amina, was the daughter of Wahb, leader of the Bani Zuhra tribe of Madinah. As an orphan, Muhammad (S.A.W.) was brought up under the protection of his uncle, Abu Taalib, Ali’s father.

Attainment of Prophethood

Muhammad (S.A.W.) attained Prophethood at the age of 40 in the solitude of the cave of Hirah, where he received the first revelation of the Qur’aan, through Angel Jibril (Gabriel). The spiritual experience of the receipt of the first revelation, which now occupies the first five verses of chapter 96 of the Qur’aan (Surah al-‘Alaq), marked the start of Muhammad’s (S.A.W.) Prophetic career. He lived in Makkah in spite of bitter opposition till the age of 53, then he migrated to Madinah, where he passed the last ten

⁴¹ See Surah al-Ahzab (33): 40.

⁴² See Surah al-Anbiya (21): 107.

⁴³ See Surah al-Baqarah (2): 285.

years of his life, in marvelous progress and achievement, till he returned to his Lord at the age of 63.

Companions

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was blessed by Allah with a number of sincere and capable companions and followers; either family members like Ali and Hamza, wives like Khadija and Aisha, daughter like Faatimah the wife of Ali, and grand children like Hassan and Hussein (the martyrs) and Zaynab, or companions like Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (the first four caliphs in Islaam), and several others, all of whom took up the cause of Islaam with unparalleled devotion and success.

His Marriages

Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, was engaged by a wealthy widow merchant, khadija, to look after her mercantile business, with the result that she, 40 years old, married Muhammad (S.A.W.), at the age of 25. She was the first and only wife of the Prophet (S.A.W.) till she died at the age of 65 in Makkah. Their married life of 25 years was a model of happy and high cooperation. During the last ten years of his life at Madinah, the Prophet, for a number of reasons, had to accept, at intervals, about ten wives. All, with the exception of only one, were widows or divorced, and some quite old. The exception was Aisha the daughter of Abu Bakr. She was the only virgin wife of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), and she was of high status and personality. Aisha was reputed for scholarship in Qur'aan and the apostolic traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W.), and she taught people Islaam ably for 48 years after the Prophet's death.

His Person and Message

The Prophet of Islaam has two specific names – Muhammad (Highly praised) and Ahmad (Most praised). He was foretold by

earlier Prophets who preceded his advent on earth. His character is the most noble of everyone that has set foot on the surface of the earth. The people called him al-Amin (the trustworthy) and as-Saadiq (the truthful), among other praise names. His message is universal, not restricted to any place or tribe. Muhammad (S.A.W.) is an excellent model of conduct for everyone whose hope is in God and the Last day, and who engages much in the Praise of God.

Says Allah, the Ever Exalted and Most High:

“You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah, an excellent example for whosoever hopes for Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah oft.”

[Surah al-Ahzab (33): 21]

“Verify Allah and His angels shower blessings on the Prophet (Muhammad-S.A.W.): O ye who believe! Invoke blessings on him and offer your salutation to him with all respects.”
{Surah al-Ahzab (33): 56}

O Allah! Bestow Thy grace on Muhammad, shower Thy blessings on him, and grant him peace.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Adapted from Quari Abdul-Haleem Eliasi's introduction to the translation of the Qur'aan by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE PILLARS OF ISLAAM

The noble prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said:

“Islaam is built on five (pillars): to testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, to perform Salaah (prayer), to pay Zakah (alms due) to go on Pilgrimage to the house (Ka’abah at Makkah), and to Fast (in the month of) Ramadhan.

[Bukhari and Muslim]

These five fundamental acts of worship mentioned in the above hadith are the pillars on which the edifice of Islaam is built. Islaam is a whole structure, and if a part of it is not functioning or is removed totally, then the structure will be defective. But if all its parts are intact and functioning, then the structure will be solid and effective. The Sahaabah⁴⁵ Abu Abdullah Jabir ibn Abdullah Al-Ansari, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that a man asked the messenger of Allah (S.A.W.), “Do you think that if I perform the obligatory prayers, fast in Ramadhan, treat as lawful that which is lawful, and treat as unlawful that which is unlawful, and do nothing further, I shall enter paradise?” He said. “Yes”⁴⁶. This does not mean that one should stick only to the fundamental acts of worship and not strive hard in the cause of Allah. Rather, it means that if a man performs these obligatory acts perfectly, while being cautious of Allah’s bounds with regards to the lawful and the

⁴⁵ Sahabah: a term used to refer to the disciples of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

⁴⁶ Related by Muslim.

prohibited, then surely he will be among the successful ones who will be the inmates of paradise in the hereafter.

SHAHAADAH **(The First Pillar of Islaam)**

We have already explained the meaning and implications of the Shahaadah in the third chapter of this book. In summary, however, the Shahaadah means:

1. That there is only one Lord, Allah, the Creator, the Organizer, the Planner, and the Sustainer of the universe.
2. That Allah has the Most Beautiful Names and Qualities as mentioned in the Qur'aan or by the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). All names and qualities of Allah are taken without changing their meanings or neglecting them. There is nothing comparable unto Allah and it does not befit His Holy Majesty to be confined with time or place and it is not accepted that Allah existed in any of his creation (not even Jesus Christ A.S.⁴⁷).
3. That Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the messenger of Allah, the custodian of guidance and the seal of prophethood.
4. That the Book of Allah (the Qur'aan) and the Prophet's apostolic tradition (sayings and deeds) are the criteria for judging between right and wrong.
5. That, in order to be a Muslim, one has to utter the shahaadah by his tongue, and his actions must be in conformity with the meanings of the Shahaadah.

⁴⁷ Acronym for 'Alayhi Salaam (meaning, on him be peace).

SALAAH **(The second Pillar of Islaam)**

Beloved brothers and sisters in Islaam, the first duty incumbent on a Muslim after the testimony of faith (*shahaadah*) is *Salaah*. *Salaah* is usually translated as prayer. However, it is a more specific term which includes postures and gesture to be assumed and made by the worshiper, namely; standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting-up and so forth. The worshiper humbly recites in each of these positions certain words of prayers which are clearly and specifically defined in the *Sunnah*⁴⁸ of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

Therefore, by definition, the term *salaah* is defined as words and deeds, beginning with *takbir* (to say Allahu Akbar) and ending with *Taslim* (to say assalaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullah), to be said and performed according to certain prescribed rules.⁴⁹

Salaah is obligatory on every sane, conscious Muslim that has attained puberty. It is the first duty a Muslim will be questioned about on the Day of Reckoning, and solemnity and full submissiveness in *salaah* is the first quality of a believer,⁵⁰. A person whose *salaah* is found faulty and defective on that great inevitable day will be among the losers. But as for him whose *salaah* will be found okay, he will be on his path to paradise. May Allah count us among such-Ameen!

The noble prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The key to paradise is salaah”

He, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

⁴⁸ Prophetic tradition.

⁴⁹ See Islam, Faith and Devotion, by Muhammad Abdul-Rauf.

⁵⁰ See Surah al-Mu'minun (23): 1 – 2

“Giving up salaah (prayer) is tantamount to disbelief and paganism.”

[Muslim]

Among the blessings of the salaah is that it restrains one from lewdness and evil⁵¹. It also trains a worshiper to constantly remember his Creator and the purpose for which he was created (i.e. worship), gives him a sense of duty, and makes him ever conscious of God. Of course, it is a means by which the servant keeps himself in harmonious relationship with his Lord and Cherisher, invoke Him, and supplicate Him.

The obligatory daily salaah are five in number, namely; Fajr (or Subhi), Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha.

Prerequisites for Performing Salaah

The following prerequisites should be fulfilled for salaah to be valid:

1. The worshiper must have a sincere intention to perform the particular salaah (e.g. Fajr, Zuhr, Asr etc.) for the sake of fulfilling his obligation to Allah and wining Allah's pleasure.
2. The worshipper, prior to performing Salaah, must be in a state of ritual purity, which is achieved by performing *al-Wudhu*⁵² (ablution) for removing minor impurities and *al-Ghusl*⁵³ (ritual bath) for removing major impurities.
3. All types of pollution (e.g. urine, stool, etc. must be removed from the body and clothes of the worshipper and from the place of prayer.

⁵¹ See Surah al-Ankabut (29): 45.

⁵² See page 61 for how to perform al-wudhu.

⁵³ See page 18 for how to perform al-ghusl.

4. The worshipper should ensure that his/her *awrah* (nudity) is fully covered. The *awrah* proper for a male is the area between his navel and his knees, while that of a female is all her body. However, her face and hands (from the finger tips to the wrist) may be exposed.

Times for Performing Salaah

Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, says:

“Verily, As-salaah (the prayer) is a duty incumbent on the believers to be conducted at specified times.”

[Surah an-Nisa (4): 103]

The stated fixed times for the five daily salawat⁵⁴ are as follows:

1. ***Fajr/Subhi (Morning Prayer)*** – The time of the morning prayer begins at true dawn (i.e. at the beginning of the morning twilight) and ends when the sun begins to rise.
2. ***Zuhr (The Early Afternoon Prayer)*** – The time of the early afternoon prayer starts from the *Zawal* (a little after the sun passes the meridian) and extends until the shadow of any object reaches a length equal to the height of the object itself plus the length of the shadow the object might have had at the beginning of this period (noon time).
3. ***Asr (The late afternoon prayer)*** – The time enjoined for the Asr prayer spans from immediately after the end of Zuhr prayer until the sun completely sets. One must hasten to perform the Asr prayer while the sun is still bright, before it turns yellow.
4. ***Maghrib (The Evening or sunset prayer)*** – Its period begins soon after sunset and lasts till the disappearance of the twilight. Its performance should not be delayed at all as it has a very

⁵⁴ Salawat: plural of salaah.

short period. It is especially disliked to delay the Maghrib salaah till when the stars appear in the sky.

5. Isha (The Night Prayer) – The night prayer begins immediately after the disappearance of the evening twilight and lasts till midnight.

As an important injunction, the five daily salawaat (prayers) should be performed at the early parts of their periods. Delaying the salaah when its time has reached is a sinful act.

Allah, Exalted be His Majesty says:

“Woe unto those who pray but delay their prayers from its stated fixed time.”

[Surah al-Ma‘un (107): 4 – 5]

And the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The best of deeds is to offer the prayers (salaah) at the beginning of their appointed times.”

[Tirmidhi and Haakim]

It is also emphatically recommended for the males to observe these salawaat (prayers) in congregation, preferably in the Masjid (Mosque).

The Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The prayer offered in congregation is twenty-seven times more superior (in reward) to the prayer performed individually.”

[Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim]

This injunction of the prophet refers only to the obligatory prayers.

Al-Wudhu (The Ablution)

Al-wudhu (Ablution) is the act of washing those parts of the body that are generally exposed, using pure, clean and fresh water. Pure water here means water that has no taste, smell, or colour, except that which is natural to it (as in the case of water gotten from a well or river). The purpose of al-wudhu is to remove minor ritual pollution which results from sleep, the coming out of anything from the lower orifices⁵⁵ (like urine, wind, excreta) etc., in order to prepare a worshiper for worship.

Al-wudhu is performed as follows:

1. Make a full intention of performing al-wudhu to attain ritual purity and recite: “Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Rahim” (Meaning in the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious the Most Merciful). Remember that the place of the intention is the heart, so one may not recite it in an audible voice, and there is no specific statement for it.
2. Wash the hands up to and including the wrist three times, cleaning under the nails and in-between the fingers.
3. Rinse your mouth with water three times. It is recommended to gargle the water.
4. Rinse the nostrils with water by gently sniffing up water with your right hand and blowing it out with your left hand three times.
5. Wash your face from the forehead to the chin-bone, and from ear to ear three times.
6. Wash your arms from the fingertips up to and including the elbows three times, starting with the right arm.

⁵⁵ Private parts.

7. Then wet your hands with fresh water and rub the whole head with it, from front to back and from back to front.
8. After that, clean your ears fully by putting the wet tip of your index finger into the hole of your ear, and the wet thumb at the back of the ear, and rubbing it from up to down and down to up.
9. After that, wash your feet up to and including the ankles until they are clean, starting with the right foot. You must take care to wash the ankles, the heels, and in-between the toes.
10. Having completed the washing, the worshipper should recite the *kalimatu-shahaadah* (words of testimony) as follows:

*Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illallah,
Wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan abduhu
wa rasuluh.*

This means: I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

The worshipper may recite in addition to that:

Allahumma-j'alni min attawaabeen
Wa-j'alni min al-mutattahireen

Meaning: O Allah! Make me among the repentant ones and make me among the purified ones.

At this stage the ablution (al-wudhu) is complete, and the worshiper is set for prayers.⁵⁶

Things That Vitiates Al-Wudhu

⁵⁶ It is advisable that one should get a knowledgeable person to practically explain to him how to perform al-wudhu.

The following actions renders ones state of ritual purity null:

1. Deep sleep.
2. Passing out of wind, urine or faeces from the lower orifices.
3. Loss of consciousness due to fainting or drunkenness etc.
4. Touching the skin of the apposite sex between marriageable persons, especially if it leads to sexual excitement.
5. Vomiting violently.

Al-Ghusl (The Ritual Bath)

The full bath (*al-ghusl*) is obligatory when one is defiled as a result of nocturnal emission (wet dream), sexual intercourse, menstruation, post childbirth bleeding, or when one is entering into the fold of Islaam.

The procedure for performing the ritual bath is exactly as described earlier in the first part of this book.⁵⁷ However, the intention this time around should not be for entering into Islaam, rather it should be for purifying ones self.

A complete ghusl suffices for al-wudhu. That is to say, one may not perform al-wudhu again after performing al-ghusl.

Tayammum (Dry Ablution)

When one cannot perform wudhu or ghusl due to unavailability of water, or when the water available is dangerous to health or just enough for drinking or cooking etc., the dry ablution serves as an alternative. The dry ablution is a favour from Allah on the Muslims. It is performed, using sand or dust, as follows:

⁵⁷ Turn to page 18.

1. Have the intention of performing tayammum in your heart and begin with the name of Allah by reciting: “Bismillaahi-Rahamaani-Rahim”.
2. Strike both palms on sand, or anything containing sand or dust, like a wall or a stone⁵⁸.
3. Pass your palms over your face once.
4. Strike the sand or dust again with your palms, and rub your right arm with your left palm from the wrist to the elbow and do the same to your left arm with your right palm.
5. Complete the process by reciting the *kalimatu-Shahaadah* as for al-wudhu.

Al-Adhan Wal-Iqamah (The Call to Prayer)

The *Adhan* is the call by which a Muslim is summoned five times daily to prayer. Rather than mere ringing of bell like the Christians do, or blowing into a horn or trumpet like the Jews do, Islaam has prescribed a complete call loaded with meaningful messages that moves every spiritually healthy heart that hears it. The call is made at the beginning of the period of each of the five obligatory daily prayers, and the person who makes the call is called the Mu’adhin. The Mu’adhin stands facing the *Qiblah*⁵⁹ in the minaret or in the courtyard of the Mosque or within the prayer room and calls out in a pleasant strong voice:

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great).

⁵⁸ One rubbing, however, suffices.

⁵⁹ The direction of the sacred Mosque at Makkah known as ka’abah.

Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illa-llah
(I bear witness that there is no god but Allah)⁶⁰

Ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illa-llah
(I bear witness that there is no god but Allah)

Ash-hadu anna Muhammadar-Rasulu-llah
(I bear witness that Muhammad is the
Messenger of Allah)

Ash-hadu anna Muhammadar-Rasulu-llah
(I bear witness that Muhammad is the
Messenger of Allah)

Hayya ‘alas-Salaah
(Come to prayer)

Hayya ‘alas salaah
(Come to prayer)

Hayya ‘alal-Falah
(Come to success)

Hayya ‘alal-Falah
(Come to success)

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

Laa ilaaha illa-llah
(There is no god but Allah)

In the adhan for the Fajr/Subh salaah, the following is added after *hayya ‘alal-lalah*:

As-Salaatu Khayrun Mina Naum

Iqaamah

The *Iqaamah* means the call to begin the prayer. It is another call to prayer said just before the actual start of Salaah when the worshippers have assembled. The Iqaamah is exactly like the Adhan, except that unlike the Adhan, the Iqaamah is recited rather

⁶⁰ The meaning of this is that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah.

speedily, and every statement that is repeated four times in the Adhan is repeated only twice in the Iqaamah, while those statements repeated twice in the Adhan is recited only once in the Iqaamah. Also, after Hayya ‘alal-falah in the Iqaamah, the following statement is added:

Qad Qaamatis-Salaah
(The prayer has begun)

Qad Qaamatis-Salaah
(The prayer has begun)

How to Perform Salaah

The five daily prayers consist of two three or four *rak'ats*. A rak'ah is a unit of prayer and it is performed in the following way:

1. Stand erect, facing the direction of the Qiblah, and make the intention (known as niyyat) in your heart for the particular salaah you want to perform {e.g. Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib or Isha). Then raise your hands up to the level of your ears or shoulders and say:

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

In the standing position, the eyes should be fixed at the place of prostration on the ground.

2. Recite the opening chapter of the Glorious Qur'aan (Surah al-Faatihah), which reads as follows:

Bismillaahi-Rahmaani-Raheem
Al-hamdu lillaahi Rabbil-'Alameen
Ar-Rahmaani-Raheem
Maaliki Yawmiddeen
Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'een
Ih-dinas-Siraatal-Mustaqeem
Siraata-lladheena an'amta 'alayhim
Ghayril-Maghdhoobi 'alayhim

Waladhaalleen
Ameen!

After reciting surah al-Faatihah, then recite another passage (chapter/chapters or verse/verses) from the Glorious Qur'aan.⁶¹

3. Bow down until your head and your back form a right angle (90°) with your legs, and with your hands grabbing your knees, saying:

Allahu-Akbar
(Allah is Great)

Recite thrice, in a whispering voice, in that position (known as *Ruku*):

Subhaana Rabbiyal-Adhim
(Glory to my Lord the Great)

4. Assume the standing position again, letting your hands remain on your sides, saying while rising:

Sami-Allahu liman Hamidah
(Allah hears whoever expresses his gratitude to Him)

And then when standing:

Rabbana lakal-Hamdu
(Our Lord! Praise be to You).

Resuming the erect position as such is called *I'tidaal*.

5. Saying, "Allahu-Abkar", prostrate yourself, descending first on your hands, with your forehead, nose palms, knees and toes touching the ground. The fingers should be kept close together, pointing to the Qiblah. This position is called *sujud* or *sajdah*.

⁶¹ Turn to page 71 for some recommended Surahs to recite after Surah al-Faatihah in Salaah.

The worshipper should remain in this position for a while, repeating thrice in a whispering voice:

Subhaana Rabbiyal-A'la

Glory to my Lord, the Most High

6. Rise from the sajdah position with your knees remaining on the ground, and sit up resting your left leg with its foot flattened on the ground, pointing towards the right foot. The right foot should be placed vertical to the ground, resting on the bottom of its toes. The palms should be placed on the knees with the fingers slightly separate from each other. This posture is known as “*Jalsah*” or “*Julus*”. The worshiper should recite twice in it:

Rabbighfirli-ghfirli

O my Lord! Forgive me. Forgive me.

The worshiper may also recite:

*Rabbighfirli, war-hamni, wa-jburni, wa-hdini,
wa-aafini, wa-fuani*

This means: O my Lord forgive me, have mercy on me, strengthen me, guide me, grant me well being, and pardon me.

7. Perform a second Sajdah exactly in the same way as the first one and sit up again. This completes a full rak’ah (unit of prayer).

For a two-raka’at prayer (like the Fajr prayer), the worshipper should stand erect once again and repeat all that was done in the performance of the first raka’ah. After the second sajdah of the second raka’ah, he should say “Allahu-Akbar” and resume the jalsah position. This time, the right hand should be formed into a fist and placed on the right knee, with the index finger pointing towards the qiblah while the left hand remains on the left knee in

exactly the same posture it was in the previous jalsah. The worshipper should then recite the *tashahud*, which reads as follows:

Attahiyaatu lillaahi wa Salawaatu wat tayyibah.
Assalaamu ‘Ala Nabiyyi Wa rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuh.
Assalaamu ‘Alayna Wa ‘Ala ‘Ibaadillaahi-Saliheen.
Ash-hadu An Laa Ilaaha Illa-llahu Wahdahu Laa Shareekalah.
Wa Ash-Hadu Anna Muhammadan ‘Abduhu Wa Rasooluh.

This means:

Humble Reverence is due to Allah;

Good deeds and prayers are for the pleasure of Allah.

Peace be upon the Prophet, together with the Mercy of Allah and His Blessings.

Peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of Allah.

I bear witness that none has right to be worshipped except Allah; He is alone and has no partner.

And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger⁶².

The worshipper should also recite the *Salaatu-Ibrahimiyyah* after the tashahud as follows:

Allahumma Salli ‘Ala Muhammadin Wa ‘Ala Aali Muhammad,

Kama sallayta ‘Ala Ibrahima Wa ‘Ala Aali Ibrahim,

Innaka Hamidun Majeed.

Allahumma Baarik ‘Ala Muhammadin wa ‘Ala Aali Muhammad,

Kama Barakta ‘Ala Ibrahima Wa ‘Ala Aali Ibrahim,

Innaka Hamidun Majid.

This means:

⁶² This is but one of many authentic versions of tashahud.

O Allah grant Muhammad peace; likewise the family of Muhammad,
As You granted Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim.
You are indeed Praise-worthy and Glorious.
O Allah bestow blessing upon Muhammad, and the family of Muhammad,
As You blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim.
You are indeed Praise-worthy and Glorious.

After that, the worshipper is recommended to supplicate Allah with the following prayer recommended in the sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (*sall-Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*):

Allahumma inni audhubika min adhaabil-qabr
Wa audhubika min fitatil-masihid-dajjaal
Wa audhubika min fitnatil mahya wal-mamaat
Allahumma inni audhubika minal-ma'thami wal-maghram.

Meaning:

O Allah! Truly I seek refuge with You from the punishment of the grave.
And I seek refuge with you from the trials of the false Christ.
And I seek refuge with You from the trials of living and dieing.
O Allah! Truly I seek refuge with You from sin and burden.

The prayer is then terminated by turning ones face first to the right, saying:

Assalaamu- 'alaykum wa-rahmatu-llah,

and then to the left repeating the same words. This is known as the "*Taslim*".

As for a three or four raka'ah prayer, the worshipper should stand up after the tashahud and the salaatu-Ibrahimiyyah (without the taslim) and perform the required number of raka'ah, reciting in a

whispering tone only surah al-Faatihah without adding any other passage from the Qur'aan. On completion of the required number of raka'at (three or four) the worshiper should recite the tashahud and salaatu-Ibrahimiyyah and terminate the prayer with the taslim as it is done for a two-raka'ah salaah.

The number of raka'ah for the Fajr prayer is two, that of Zuhr is four, that of Asr is also four, that of Maghrib is three, and that of Isha is four.

The recitation of Surah al-Faatihah and other passages from the Qur'aan is done in an audible voice in the two raka'at of Fajr prayer, and the first two raka'ah of Maghrib and Isha prayers. It is done in a whispering voice for the entire raka'at of Zuhr and Asr prayers, the last raka'ah of Maghrib prayer, and the last two raka'ah of Isha prayer.

Recommended Surahs to be recited After Surah Al-Faatihah

The following are some recommended Surahs of the Qur'aan, carefully selected for their brevity, to be recited after Surah al-Faatihah:

I. Surah Al-'Asr (The Time)

Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Raheem.	In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
1. By Al- 'Asr (the time).	Wal- 'Asr.
2. Verily, man is in loss,	Innal-Insaana Lafee Khusr.
3. Except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend	Illa-Ladhina Aamanu Wa 'Amilu-Salihaati Wa Tawaasaw bil-Haqi Wa Tawaasaw Bi-Sabr.

one another to patience.	
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II. Surah Al-Kawthar (A River In Paradise)

Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Raheem.	In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
1. Verily, We have granted you (O Muhammad S.A.W.) Al-Kawthar (a river in Paradise).	Inna A'taynaakal-Kawthar.
2. Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice (to him only).	Fasalli Li Rabbika Wan-Har.
3. For he who hates you (O Muhammad S.A.W.), he will be cut off (from posterity and every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter).	Inna Shaani-aka Huwal-Abtar.

III. Surah Al-Ikhlaas (The Purity)

Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Raheem.	In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
1. Say (O Muhammad S.A.W.): "He is Allah, the One.	Qul Huwa-llahu Ahad.
2. Allah the Self-Sufficient Master, whom all creatures need.	Allahu-Samad.
3. He begets not nor was He begotten.	Lam Yalid Wa Lam Yuwlad.

4. And there is none co-equal or comparable to Him."	Wa Lam Yakun Lahu Kufuwan Ahad
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IV. Surah Al-Falaq (The Daybreak)

Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Raheem.	In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
1. Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh), the Lord of the daybreak,	Qul A‘udhu Bi Rabbil-Falaq.
2. From the evil of what He has created,	Min Sharri Maa Khalaq.
3. And from the evil of the darkening (night) as it comes with its darkness; (or the moon as it sets or goes away),	Wa Min Sharri Ghaasikin Idhaa Waqab.
4. And from the evil of those who practise witchcraft when they blow in the knots,	Wa Min Sharri Naffaathaati Fil-‘Uqad.
5. And from the evil of the envier when he envies."	Wa Min Sharri Haasidin Idhaa Hasad.

V. Surah An-Nas (Mankind)

Bismillahi-Rahmaani-Raheem.	In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
1. Say: "I seek refuge with (Allâh) the Lord of mankind,	Qul A‘udhu Bi Rabbin-Nas.
2. The King of mankind –	Malikin-Nas.
3. The Ilâh (God) of mankind,	Ilaahin-Nas.

4. From the evil of the whisperer (devil who whispers evil in the hearts of men) who withdraws (from his whispering in one's heart after one remembers Allâh).	Min Sharri Waswaasil-Khannas.
5. Who whispers in the breasts of mankind.	Alladhi Yuwaswisu Fi Sudurinnas.
6. Of jinn and men."	Minal-Jinnati Wan-Nas.

Supererogatory Prayers Before and After the Daily Salawaat (Rawaatib)

These are prayers that are performed shortly before and after the compulsory five daily salawaat. They are known as *nawaafil salaah*. They serve as supplements to the *Fard* (obligatory prayers). However, they are not preceded by the Adhan and Iqaamah. Recitation of surah al-Faatihah and other passages of the Qur'aan in the supererogatory prayers is done in a silent whispering voice for the Fajr, Zuhr, and Asr time nawaafil prayers. As for the Maghrib time and Isha time nawaafil prayers, the worshipper has the option to either recite in an audible or whispering voice. The emphatically stressed nawaafil prayers are two rak'ah before Fajr, two or four raka'ah before Zuhr and likewise after it, two or four raka'ah before Asr, two after Maghrib, and two after Isha. It is also recommended to observe the shaf'i and witr prayers, consisting of two and one raka'at respectively after the Isha prayer.

Salaatul-Jumu'ah (The Friday Prayer)

All praise and adoration be unto Allah, the Exalted in Might, Who guided the Muslims to the best day of the week, Friday. In the

words of Allah's choicest Messenger, blessings and peace be upon him:

"The best day on which the sun rises is Friday. On that day Adam (A.S.) was born, and on that day was he entered into Paradise and on that day he was expelled from Paradise. And the Hour (of Judgement) will only be established on Friday."

[Muslim]

The Friday prayer is one of the most important acts of worship in the religion of Islaam. It is an act that is very pleasing to Allah which, if performed properly, expiates the minor sins a worshiper committed over a period of ten days.

Abu Hurairah, one of the eminent disciples of the Prophet (S.A.W), related that the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

"Whoever makes ablution (Al-Wudhu) and excels in performing the ablution, then goes to the Mosque and listens (to the sermon) and remains quiet, then forgiven for him will be whatever he did (of minor sins) from that Friday to the previous Friday plus an additional three days."

[Muslim]

In another hadith, Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

"The five daily prayers, one Friday prayer to the next Friday prayer, from (one) Ramadhan to the next Ramadhan, they all expiate whatever is between them as long as the person avoids the great sins."

[Muslim]

Upon Whom Is The Friday Prayer Obligatory?

The Friday prayer is obligatory upon every free⁶³, sane, adult, non-traveling Muslim male. Neither business nor anything else should divert one from this all-important obligation.

Allah, Glorified and Most High, says:

“O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the *Salaat* (prayer) on Friday, come to the remembrance of Allah and leave off business (and every other thing). That is best for you, if you did but know!”

[Surah al-Jumu’ah (62):9]

Allah’s Messenger, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The Friday prayer is a right and obligation upon every Muslim in the community except four: a slave, a woman, a child (non-adult) or a sick person.

[Abu Dawud]

Although the Friday prayer is not obligatory upon women to attend, if they wish to do so they should not be prevented. This is based on the hadith of the Prophet (S.A.W.) in which he explicitly stated that:

“If the female servants of Allah ask permission to attend the Mosque, do not prevent them.”

[Muslim]

This permission for women to attend the Friday prayers is especially important in non-predominantly Muslim populated places, in order for them to benefit from the *Khutbah* (sermon). However, they must take care not to expose their bodies or dress in tight-fitting or attractive attires, and they must not use perfumes.

⁶³ One who is not a slave.

As believers, we must not be lackadaisical about our observance and performance of the Friday prayer. The Prophet (S.A.W.) sternly warned against missing the Friday prayer for no valid reason – e.g. trade, watching a football match or a T.V. show, etc. In his words, blessings and peace be upon him:

“The people must cease from not performing the Friday prayer or Allah will put a seal over their hearts and they will then become one of the heedless.”

[Muslim]

On another occasion, the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“Whoever misses three Friday prayers because he was lackadaisical concerning them, Allah will put a seal over his heart.”

[Ahmad, Abu Dawud and others]

He, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

“Whoever misses three Friday prayers without any valid reason is a hypocrite.”

[Ibn Hibban]

It should be noted that these ahadith do not specifically mention that the Fridays have to be consecutive. They could possibly refer to missing three Fridays in a year, and so forth⁶⁴. However, Ibn Abbas, another eminent disciple of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), stated:

“If someone misses three consecutive Friday prayers, he has hurled Islaam behind him.”

[Abu Yala]

⁶⁴ See Jamaal al-Din Zarabozo, *“The Fiqh of the Friday Prayer”* p. 8.

According to the great scholar of Islaam, al-Iraqi, the above statement of Ibn Abbas must be considered *marfoo* (ie. having its source with the messenger of Allah) because something like that cannot be said based on personal reasoning.⁶⁵

As a way of emphasizing the importance of the Friday prayer, the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

“I considered appointing someone to lead the prayer, then I would go to those men who did not attend the Friday prayer and burn down their houses upon them.”

[Muslim]

The Time of the Friday Prayer

The Friday prayer takes the place of the zuhr prayer. That is, a person who performs the Friday prayer does not have to perform the zuhr prayer of that day. The time of the Friday prayer spans from the time of zuhr prayer, or shortly before then⁶⁶, to the time of Asr prayer⁶⁷.

Preparation for the Friday Prayer

The Friday is regarded as a weekly *Eid*⁶⁸ for the Muslims. As such, a worshiper is expected to perform *al-ghusl* (the ritual bath), put on nice and clean clothes (preferably white), apply some oil and perfume, clip his finger nails and toe nails, and proceed calmly to the *Masjid* (Mosque). It is also recommended to use a *miswak* (tooth stick) to clean the teeth, as this increases a person's reward for the prayer.

⁶⁵ Muhammad ibn Ali al-Shaukani, *Nail al-Autar*, vol. 3, p. 272. Quoted in “*The Fiqh of the Friday prayer*”.

⁶⁶ The Fiqh of the Friday prayer.

⁶⁷ *ibid*

⁶⁸ Festive day for Muslims.

How to Perform the Friday Prayer

When the time of the Friday service has come, the worshipper is expected to go as early as possible to the Mosque, sit quietly and listen to the Imam who delivers a two-part sermon, after which he leads the congregation in a two-raka'at salaah. The salaah is performed like the Fajr salaah; i.e. by reciting in an audible voice, surah al-Faatihah and other passages of the Qur'aan in the two raka'ats. The worshippers listen to the Imam's recitation and do not recite along with him, and they follow him in all his actions e.g. standing, bowing, prostrating etc.

Upon entering the Mosque, the worshipper is recommended to perform two *nafl* (supererogatory) raka'ats of prayer known as *Tahiyyatul-Masjid* (Mosque greeting prayer). After that, he may observe as much number of *nawaafil*⁶⁹ prayers till the Imam arrives.

When the prayer is ended, then the worshippers may return to their businesses or other vocations. This is in conformity with Allah's injunction:

“Then when the prayer is ended, you may disperse through the land, and seek the Bounty of Allah, and remember Allah much: that you may be successful.”

[Surah al-Jumu'ah 962):10]

⁶⁹ Plural of *nafl* (Supererogatory).

ZAKAAH **(The Third Pillar of Islaam)**

Dear brothers and sisters in Islaam, after the salaah (prayer), zakaah (compulsory alms giving) is another important pillar of Islaam. zakaah primarily means purity and cleanliness, but technically in Islaam, it is used to refer to the act of selecting aside a portion of ones belongings for the poor and needy in the Muslim community. This implies that it is by “giving” out of that which Allah as bestowed on you that your wealth is purified, and along with it, your own self too.

A person’s wealth and inner self remains impure if he does not give to the poor and needy their due. zakaah is the major economic means for establishing social justice and leading the Muslim society to prosperity and security.

Allah has ordained every Muslim who possesses wealth up to a certain minimum amount, known as the *Nisab*, to pay annually of his possession the zakaah to the poor or to the other categories of eligible recipients mentioned in the Qur’aan⁷⁰. The *nisab* is specified for each type of the property. The giving of zakaah soothes the feelings of the poor, satisfies their needs, and strengthens the bond of mutual love between the poor and the rich in the society.

As an indication of its importance, zakaah is mentioned alongside salaah (prayers) in no less than eighty-two places in the Glorious Qur’aan.

Allah, the Almighty and All-Wise, says:

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah offering Him sincere devotion, to attend to

⁷⁰ See Surah at-Tawbah (9): 60.

their prayers (*Salah*) and to pay the alms-due (*Zakaah*). That, surely is the true religion.”

[Surah al-Bayyinah (98): 5]

“This is the Book (the Qur’aan), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance for the God-conscious who believe in the unseen and perform the prayer and spend out that we have provided them (i.e. give *Zakaah*)... it is they who follow the guidance from their Lord, and is they who are successful.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 2-3]

“Indeed your true friend is only Allah, and His Messenger, and the believers who perform the prayer (*salaah*) and give the alms (*Zakaah*) and they are Raki’un (those who bow down or submit themselves with obedience to Allah in prayer”.

[Surah al-Ma‘idah (5):55]

For a Muslim to be qualified for employment in the service of Allah, he must possess such virtues as large-heartedness, magnanimity, selflessness, purity of heart, and benevolence. All these qualities the giving of zakaah aims to achieve.

Properties on which Zakaah should be paid

The payment of zakah is due on any of the following six categories as long as they reach the nisab:

1. Naqd; i.e., gold, silver and money.
2. Merchandise, i.e., items held for the purpose of trade.
3. Cattle (including oxen, cows, bufallos, camels, sheep and goats).
4. Minerals dug out from the ground.
5. Rikaaz; i.e., an ancient treasure belonging to the pre-Islaamic age, excavated from ones own property or found in an

unclaimed land. If it belongs to the Islaamic age, it has to be returned to its owner.

6. Crops gathered from tilled fields. According to some jurists⁷¹, to Allah is due a share of every produce of the earth except self-growing things such as wood and grass.

The Nisab (Minimum Amount) for Which Zakaah is Due

The minimum amount (*nisab*) for which zakaah must be paid in the case of money, gold, silver, merchandise, and dug out mineral or ancient treasure is the weight of 90 grams of gold or the value of this amount. In Nigeria today, the nisab for money is #173,064. That is to say, whoever possesses up to #173,064 in reserve, whether kept at home or in a bank account, for a period of one full year, must give out zakaah on it.

In the case of cattle, the nisab is 30 cows or 40 sheep or 5 camels.

In principle, the obligation of zakaah is not due on any property (money, gold silver or merchandize) unless the following conditions are met:

- a. The property must be owned by a sane Muslim who has reached maturity.
- b. The amount of the property should reach the minimum required measure (nisab) for zakaah.
- c. The property, if it is gold, silver, money or merchandise should have remained one lunar year in the possession of the owner.

The Time Of Paying The Zakaah

The payment of the zakaah of the crops is due at the time of its harvest. Allah, Mighty and Exalted, says:

⁷¹ The Hanafis.

“Eat of their fruit when they ripen, but pay the due there of (*Zakaah*) on the day of its harvest.”

[Surah al-An‘am (6): 141]

The zakaah of minerals and of an ancient treasure is due when the mineral or treasure has been excavated.

As for the zakaah of the other items, it has to be paid at the end of the year, during which the property has remained in the possession of its owner.

Amount of Zakaah

The zakaah of the crops is 10% of the harvest gotten from an easily irrigated land. (i.e. a land irrigated by river, springs or rain). On the other hand, if the irrigation of the land involves any special effort or cost, the amount of zakah becomes only 5% of the harvest.

The zakaah of excavated minerals is 2.5% of the pure extracted amount; and that of an ancient treasure is 20%.

The amount of Zakaah for oxen, cows, sheep, goats and camels is presented in a tabular form below.

Property	Measure	Amount Of Zakaah
Oxen and cows	30 heads	1 one-year cow or ox
	40 heads	1 two-year cow
	60 heads	2 one-year cows
	70 heads	1 one-year cow and 1 two-year cow

And so on, one-year cow in every 30 and two-year cow in every 40 heads of cows or oxen.

Sheep and goats	40 heads	One-yearly lamb if they are
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		sheep, or a yearly goat if they are goats, but neither if they are mixed.
	121 heads	Two
	201 heads	Three
	400 heads	Four

After this, the zakaah is one more in every hundred heads

Camels	5 heads	1 yearly lamb or ewe
	10 heads	2 lambs or ewes
	15 heads	3 lambs or ewes
	20 heads	4 lambs or ewes
	25 heads	1 one-year she-camel
	36 heads	1 two-year she-camel
	46 heads	1 three-year she-camel
	61 heads	1 four-year she-camel
	76 heads	2 two-year she-camel
	91 heads	2 three-year she-camels
	121 heads	3 two-year

		she-camels
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In 130 or over by tens, it is 1 two-year she camel in every 30 heads, and 1 three-year she-camel in every 40 camels.

zakaah is not due on the number of cattle (oxen, cows, camels, sheep and goats) between each two brackets.

In the case of merchandise, the zakaah is $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of its value at the end of the year, taking into account the profit accrued which is to be added to the value of the goods and is to be considered in reaching the nisab. This means that if the value of the goods, furniture, houses or anything else, is below the nisab but reaches it with the addition of the profit, then the duty of zakaah applies.

As for money, gold and silver, the zakaah is also $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the amount which has been in possession of its owner for a full year, not minding where it was kept.

Due Recipients of the Zakaah

According to the Qur'aan (Surah at-Tawah 9:60), eight categories of people are entitled to receive zakaah. They are as follows:

1. ***Masaakin (The destitute and needy)*** – Masaakin are those who do have some money but not sufficient to meet their essential needs. They live under severe hardship and difficulties but do not beg from any body.
2. ***Fuqara (The poor)*** – They are those who are totally destitute, having nothing with which to meet their needs. Also included among this category are those who are fit and willing to work but are unemployed.
3. ***'Amilina "alayhaa (Those who administer zakaah)*** – They are those people who are employed in the service of zakaah, i.e., in

change of its collection and distribution. They are entitled to be paid their salaries and wages from the zakaah fund.

4. ***Mu'allafatul-qulub (Those who need to be reconciled in favour of Islaam)*** – These are the people who require to be given money to seek their support for Islaam or to prevent them from opposition. Muslim reverts⁷² are also included in this category. Reverts who may lose their job or homes upon embracing Islaam deserve every help, but even the healthy among them may be given zakaah to win their hearts by showing them at first hand the caring nature of Islaam.
5. ***Fi-riqab (Securing the freedom of slaves)*** – A slave who wants to free himself from slavery is entitled to receive zakaah so that he can pay the necessary money to his master. However, as slavery no longer exists, this category can be extended to other such people like those who have been imprisoned for their inability to pay fines imposed on them. Such people can be helped with zakaah fund to secure their release, if their offence is not criminal, or they are innocent of the charges against them.
6. ***Al-gharimin (Over burdened debtors)*** – Zakaah is also the entitlement of those who are so overburdened with debt that they cannot pay it on their own. However, it should be given only to those who cannot pay off their debt, or whose debt are so large that after paying them off their remaining wealth falls below the minimum amount on which zakaah is due; not to those whose wealth exceeds their debts.
7. ***Fi-Sabili-llah (In the way of Allah)*** – The overwhelming majority of Islaamic jurists all agree that this category refers to jihaad and the soldiers who participate therein. In the context

⁷² A person who just accepted Islaam. He is considered a revert rather than a convert because the Prophet (S.A.W.) taught us that every man is born in the natural path (Islaam).

of today's settings, jihaad could be extended to refer to the noble service of da'wah (propagation of Islaam). Zakaah could technically, therefore, be for the poor and needy Muslims engaged in da'wah.

8. ***Ibnu-Sabil (A traveler or wayfarer)*** – A traveler may have any amount of wealth at home, but if he is in need of money while on a journey, then he is entitled to receive zakaah.

Other Important Principles of Zakaah

1. Zakaah is an obligation that is due only on Muslims. Non-Muslims (referred to as dhimmis) living in an Islaamic state are exempted from this duty. They are to pay in lieu of zakaah, an annual small tax known as *Jizyah*. This payment is in return for the security and other services rendered to them by the state. However, children, women, old men and the poor are exempted from this obligation.
2. Only Muslims are entitled to receive zakaah. The definition of zakah, as given in the Hadith is:

“It will be taken from the wealthy among you (the Muslims) and given to the poor among you (the Muslims).”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

There is a share, however, in all other general charities (*sadaqah*), or social security payments for non-Muslims.

3. Children cannot give zakaah to each other, nor can husbands and wives. But a distant relative is entitled to receive the zakaah, in fact, he has more right to it than others. It is permissible, however, for wives to give zakaah to their husbands if they are in need, and there are a number of ahadith that support this.

4. The zakaah raised in a locality should not be transferred to recipients of other localities unless they are in greater need of it. Rather it should be spent on the poor inhabitants of the same locality from which it was collected. An exception to this rule is when no one in the immediate locality is entitled to it, or some calamity such as flood, famine, or earthquake necessitates urgent dispatch to other localities. In this case some part of the zakaah may be dispatched abroad but some should be spent in the immediate locality.
5. In Islaam, all obligatory acts of worship are best carried out in a collective basis. Islaam does not approve of individualism. Therefore, except where impossible, efforts should be made to collectivize the collection and distribution of zakaah in order that it be done systematically and effectively.

SADAQAH (VOLUNTARY CHARITY)

Besides the obligatory alms giving (zakah), a Muslim is highly encouraged to spend charitably, out of his own free will, in the cause of Allah, without ostentation. There are many verses of the Qur'aan and Hadith that encourage this kind of spending.

Allah, the Exalted and Most High says:

“The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures needs, All-Knower.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 261]

The following are some of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) that encourage charitable spending (*sadaqah*):

“The hand which gives is better with Allah than the hand that receives.”

“As-Sadaqah (the charity) extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire.”

[Tirmidhi]

“There are two characteristics which are not combined in a believer; miserliness and bad morals.”

[Tirmidhi]

The giving of zakaah, however, carries more importance than sadaqah. This is because the former is done in obedience to Allah’s command while the latter is done voluntarily, and whenever one pleases, though it is also done to seek Allah’s pleasure and mercy.

It should be noted that while the giving of zakaah may be done publicly, sadaqah should be given privately, in a cheerful and courteous manner and with regards for the recipient’s sense of dignity.

Allah, the Exalted and Most High, says:

“O you who believe! Do not render in vain your Sadaqah (charity) with reminders of your generosity or by injury; like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men, and he does not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 264]

And the Prophet (S.A.W.) counted among those who will be sheltered under the shade of Allah on the Day of Judgment when there will be no other shade besides His shade:

“...one who gives charity in a secrete way without making a show, in a way that his left hand does not know what his right hand spent.”

[Bukhari and Muslim]

It is also recommended that the materials given in charity should be of good quality and not the bad or unwanted materials which if

you were given, you would not accept it save very reluctantly or merely out of formality. Obviously, such charity is not acceptable to Allah, the Rich and Praise-Worthy, for He says in His Glorious Book:

“O you who believe! Spend out of the good things which you have (legally) earned, and of that which We have produced from the earth for you; and do not aim at that which is bad to spend from it, (though) you would not accept it save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein. And know that Allah is Rich (Free of all needs), and worthy of all praise. Shaytan (Satan) threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit evil deeds, whereas Allah promises you Forgiveness from Himself and Bounty, and Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 267 – 268]

Importantly, beloved brothers and sisters, in order to attain piety, it is necessary to give in charity what you love the most. The Most Gracious and Most Merciful, Allah, says in the Noble Qur’aan:

“By no means shall you attain Al-Birr (piety, righteousness – here it means Allah’s reward, i.e. Paradise), unless you spend (in Allah’s Cause) of that which you love; and whatever of good you spend, Allah knows it well.”

[Surah Aal-Imran (3): 92]

Finally, it should be noted that every act done, or assistance rendered, to others (seeking Allah’s pleasure) is counted as charity, in Islaam. For example, meeting your Muslim brother or sister with a cheerful countenance, guiding a lost person towards his destination, etc.

SAWMU-RAMADHAN **(The Fourth Pillar of Islaam)**

To fast in the month of Ramadhan, the ninth month of the Islaamic calendar (known as the Hijrah calendar) is the fourth Pillar of Islam. Fasting, in Islaam, means abstaining from food, drink, and sexual activities from dawn till sunset for the sake of Allah.

Allah, Exalted be His Majesty, says:

“O believers! Fasting is ordained for you, even as it was ordained for those before you, that you might attain to God-consciousness.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 183]

“The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur’aan, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you is present let him fast the month, and who is sick or on a journey let him fast the same number from other days. Allah desires for you ease; He desires not hardship for you. You should complete the period and you should magnify Allah for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 185]

The fasting is meant to be a moral training in the practice of self-control, through abstinence. This all-important abstinence encompasses abstinence from food, drink, sexual activities, evil thoughts, evil talks, and evil deeds.

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“Whoever does not give up lying (i.e. telling lies) and acting upon it, and evil actions etc., then Allah is not in need of his

leaving his food and Drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting).”

[Bukhari]

He, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

“Assiyaam (the fasting) is junnah (protection or shield or a screen or a shelter from the Hell-fire). So the person observing sawm (fasting) should avoid sexual relation with his wife and should not behave foolishly and impudently, and if somebody fights with him or abuse him, he should say to him twice, ‘I am fasting’. The Prophet (S.A.W.) added, “By Him in Whose hands my soul is, the smell coming out from the mouth of a fasting person is better with Allah than the smell of musk⁷³. (Allah says about the fasting person), ‘He has left his food, drink and desires for My sake. The fast is for Me. So I will reward (the fasting person) for it, and the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times.”

[Bukhari]

Although all acts of worship are for Allah, here Allah singles out fasting, because fasting is the only act of worship that cannot be practiced for the sake of showing-off, as nobody except Allah can know whether a person is fasting or not. A person may claim to be fasting, and feign hunger, thirst and weakness, but go in secrete to eat and drink to his fill, and then come out again to continue his pretence. So, only Allah knows who is truly fasting. Therefore fasting is a pure act of worship that cannot be blemished with hypocrisy.

⁷³ A substance with a strong fragrance that is used in making some perfumes.

Components of the Fast

The fasting has two major components: the *Niyyah* (intention) and the *Imsaak* (abstention). On the eve of the first day of the month of Ramadhan, before dawn, the worshiper makes his intention to fast this month for the sake of Allah. It is recommended, however, to repeat this *Niyyah* (intention) every night for the rest days of the month, especially if one did not make the intention on the first night of Ramadhan to fast the whole month. But if the intention was made on the first night of Ramadhan to fast the whole month, then there may be no need to repeat it every night of Ramadhan. After making the intention, the worshipper is expected to take a light pre-dawn meal known as *Sahur*, shortly before dawn, say by fifteen minutes. After taking the *sahur*, the worshipper starts the abstention from food, drink, etc. till immediately after sunset then he breaks the fast. The act of fast breaking is known as *Iftaar*, and it is recommended to use date fruit or, where that is not possible, water to break the fast. The worshipper should recite before breaking the fast:

*Dhahaba dhama' u, wabtallatil- 'urooqu, wathabatal-ajru
inshaa Allah*

Meaning: The thirst has gone and the veins are moistened, and reward is confirmed, if Allah wills.

If a worshipper eats or drinks absent-mindedly while fasting, he should get out what is still in his mouth as soon as he remembers that he is fasting, and thereafter continue his fast. In this case his fasting is still valid.

However, if a worshipper deliberately does an act that vitiates the fast, like eating, drinking etc., then he must observe abstention for the rest of the day (as further violation would be another sin provoking Allah's wrath), and fast one day for each day he has

broken, as early as possible after the day of *Eid-ul-fitr*¹. This act of paying back a broken fast is known as *Qadaa*. However, if the worshipper has broken the fast by an intercourse, then he, in addition, has to free a slave. If he cannot do so, he must fast 60 consecutive days of which an interruption in it will obligate him to resume fasting from the beginning. If he still cannot perform this, then he must feed sixty poor Muslims instead. This penalty is called *Kaffaarah*.

After observing the Iftaar (the fast breaking) the worshipper is free to eat, drink and have sexual relations with his wife till the time of sahur again.

Those Permitted To Leave Off Fasting

According to Allah's injunction and the blessed prophetic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), it is permissible for a sick Muslim, a Muslim traveling on a journey or a menstruating woman to leave-off fasting, but to make up for what they missed by fasting the same number of days from other months preferably before the next Ramadhan.

Suckling mothers and pregnant women are also permitted to break their fast if fasting will harm them or their babies, but they too should compensate fully for this by fasting equal number of days from other months⁷⁴.

¹ The reader is advised to consult books dealing on this (fasting) for further details.

⁷⁴ Some other scholars hold that both suckling mothers and pregnant women are to do fidyah (feeding a poor person for each day of the fast missed) in Ramadhan, and they need not pay back the missed days of fasting after Ramadhan. And Allah knows best.

Acts That Nullify the Fast

Every Muslim must know the actions that vitiate the fast in order to avoid them. These actions can be divided into eight types:

1. **Change of Intention** – Intention is one of the pillars of fasting. While fasting, if one has the intention to break his fast before sunset, then he has broken his fast. This applies even if he does not actually eat or drink anything after having the intention to break his fast.
2. **Eating and Drinking** – Eating and drinking of any kind of food or drink invalidates the fasting. By definition, fasting is abstinence from food, drink and sexual intercourse from dawn till sunset for the sake of Allah.
3. **Hijamah** – Hijamah means to take out blood by scarification (cupping) or by opening the vein. Hijamah invalidates the fast according to the hadith of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), where he said:

“The person whom the Hijamah is made for and the person who made the Hijamah have broken their fast.”

[Ahmad and Abu Dawud]

The great scholar of Islaam, Imam al-Bukhari said: There is no hadith on this subject that is more authentic than this one. However, according to another great scholar of Islaam, Imam Assan’aani, the majority of the scholars are of the opinion that cupping is allowed while fasting, as proved by the hadith of the great companion of the Prophet, Ibn Abbas, that is narrated at a period of time later than that of the earlier hadith, as Ibn Abbas accompanid the Prophet on his farewell pilgrimage. In that hadith, Ibn Abbas narrated that:

“The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) had himself cupped while he was in a state of Ihram and had himself cupped while he was fasting.

[Bukhari]

So, it was probably prohibited at the beginning during fasting, but later it was allowed, and it is only disliked if the person becomes weak due to cupping while fasting.

4. **Ejaculation** – Ejaculation of sperm (with intention) invalidates the fast, even if it was just due to kissing, hugging or masturbation. In the hadith qudsi, Allah says:

“The fasting person leaves his food, drink and desire for My sake.”

[Bukhari]

5. **Injections containing Nourishment** – Intake of anything that has the same effect as eating and drinking invalidates the fast. For example, any injection which nourishes the body and acts like food would break one's fast. Other types of injections that are not used for nourishment does not invalidate the fast even if they are taken through the veins.

6. **Vomiting** – Abu Hurairah, an eminent disciple of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), reported that the Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“Whoever is overcome by vomiting, is not to make up the day (of fasting). (But) whoever vomits intentionally must make up the day.”

[Ahmad and Abu Dawud]

7. **Sexual Intercourse** – Sexual intercourse not only invalidates one's fast but also obliges him to make expiation (Kaffarah) for this prohibited action. One of the following actions (in the order of priority stated below) must be done in order to make amends. First he should free a Muslim slave. However, if that

is not possible then he should fast two months consecutively. If he is not able to do this then he should feed sixty poor people.

8. **Menses and Postpartum Bleeding** – Appearance of menstruation or postpartum bleeding nullifies the fast even if it begins just a few minutes before sunset.

HAJJ (The Fifth Pillar of Islaam)⁷⁵

Hajj is one of the best acts of worship and is one of the most sublime deeds because it is one of the pillars of Islaam that Allah sent Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) with. A servant's religion is incomplete without it, except when he cannot afford it or he is incapacitated.

A form of worship is only acceptable when the following is true.

1. One devotes it to Allah alone, with a desire for the Hereafter. It cannot be done with the intention of being seen among men or for worldly gains.
2. One follows the Prophet's example, in words and deeds. This cannot be accomplished except with knowledge of the sunnah⁷⁶.

Forms of Pilgrimage

There are three forms of Hajj: *Tamattu*⁷⁷, *Ifraad*⁷⁸, and *Qiran*⁷⁹.

Tamattu': A pilgrim wears Ihram⁸⁰ for Umrah⁸¹ only during the months of Hajj, which means when he reaches Makkah, he makes Tawaf⁸² and Sa'i⁸³ for Umrah. He then shaves or clips his hair. On

⁷⁵ Culled from the article: "How to Perform the Rituals of Hajj and Umrah", by Shaikh Muhammad As-Salih Al-Uthaimin.

⁷⁶ Way of the Prophet.

⁷⁷ Enjoyable form of Hajj.

⁷⁸ Isolated form of Hajj.

⁷⁹ Accompanied form of Hajj.

⁸⁰ The ceremonial state of making Hajj or the Hajj garments themselves.

⁸¹ Minor Hajj: the combination of Tawaf and Sa'yi.

⁸² Circumambulation of the Ka'bah.

⁸³ The walk made between As-Safaa and Al-Marwah.

the day of Tarwiya, which is the eighth of Dhul-Hijja⁸⁴, he puts on his Ihram for Hajj only and carries out all of its requirements.

Ifraad: A pilgrim wears Ihram for Hajj only. When he reaches Makkah, he performs Tawaf for his arrival and Sa'i for Hajj. He doesn't shave or clip his hair as he doesn't disengage from Ihram. Instead, he remains in Ihram till after he stones Jamrah Al-Aqaba⁸⁵ on the Eid⁸⁶ day. It is permissible for him to postpone his Sa'i for Hajj until after his Tawaf for Hajj.

Qiran: A pilgrim wears Ihram for both Umrah and Hajj or he wears Ihram first for Umrah, then makes intentions for Hajj before his Tawaf for Hajj. The obligations on one performing Ifraad are the same as those on one performing Qiran, except that the latter must slaughter whereas the former is not obligated to do so. The best of the three forms is Tamattu'. It is the form that the Prophet (S.A.W.) encouraged his followers to perform. Even if a pilgrim makes intentions to perform Qiran or Ifraad he is allowed to change his intentions to Tamattu'; he can do this even after he has performed Tawaf and Sa'i.

When the Prophet (S.A.W.) performed Tawaf and Sa'i during the year of the Farewell Hajj with his companions, he ordered all those who hadn't brought sacrificial animals to change their intentions for Hajj to intentions for Umrah, cut their hair, and disengage from Ihram till Hajj.

He, blessings and peace be upon him, said,

"If I hadn't brought the sacrificial animal, I would have done what I have ordered you to do."

⁸⁴ The twelfth month of the Islamic calendar.

⁸⁵ The monument closest to Makkah.

⁸⁶ Celebration for Muslims

The Umrah

If a pilgrim wishes to be ritually pure for Umrah, he should shed his clothing and bathe as he would after sexual defilement (i.e. perform ghusl), if convenient. He should perfume his head and beard with the best oil he can find. There is no harm in what remains of it after Ihram.

Bathing for Ihram is sunnah for both men and women, including menstruating women and those experiencing postnatal bleeding. After bathing and preparing himself, a pilgrim, other than those menstruating or experiencing postnatal bleeding, prays the obligatory prayer, if it is time. Otherwise, he makes his intention by praying the two sunnah raka'ats which are made each time wudhu is performed.

When he finishes his prayer he should say:

"Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik. Labbaika Laa Sharika Laka Labbaik. Innal-Hamda Wanni'mata Laka Wal-Mulk. Laa Sharika Lak."

Meaning: "Here I am at Your service, O Allah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Surely all praise, grace and dominion is Yours, and You have no partner."⁸⁷

A man raises his voice when saying this and a woman says it so that only one beside her may hear her.

One in Ihram should say the Talbeeyah as often as possible, especially when times and places change. For example, when descending or ascending during travel or when day or night approach. He should also ask Allah for His pleasure, for Heaven and seek refuge in Allah's mercy from Hellfire.

⁸⁷ This is known as Talbeeyah. It is the glorification a Muslim recites once he is in Ihram and has made his intention.

One should say the Talbeeyah during Umrah, starting from the time he puts on his Ihram till he starts Tawaf. During Hajj he should say it starting from the time he puts on his Ihram till he starts to stone Jamrah Al-Aqaba on the Eid day.

When a pilgrim enters the Holy Mosque he puts forth his right foot first and says:

"In the name of Allah, may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah. Oh Allah, forgive me my sins and open to me the doors of Your mercy. I seek refuge in Allah the Almighty and in His Eminent Face and in His Eternal Dominion from the accursed Satan."

He approaches the Black Stone, touches it with his right hand and kisses it. If this isn't possible, he should face the Black Stone and point to it. It is best not to push and shove, causing harm and being harmed by other people.

When touching the Stone, a pilgrim should say the following:

"In the name of Allah, Allah is the greatest. Oh, Allah, with faith in you, belief in Your book, loyalty to you, compliance to the way of your Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)."

A pilgrim must walk, keeping the Ka'bah⁸⁸ on his left. When he reaches the Rukn Al Yamani⁸⁹ he should touch, but not kiss it, and say:

"Our Lord, grant us good in this life and good in the hereafter and save us from the punishment of the Hell fire. Oh Allah, I beg of You for forgiveness and health in this life and in the Hereafter."

Each time he passes the Black Stone he should say:

⁸⁸ The house of Allah in the Holy Mosque in Makkah.

⁸⁹ The corner of the Ka'bah which faces Yemen.

"Allah is the Greatest."

During the remainder of his Tawaf he may say what he pleases of supplications, mentioning Allah, and recitation of Qur'aan. This is because Tawaf, Sa'i, and Stoning the Jamrah⁹⁰ have been devised for the purpose of mentioning Allah.

During this Tawaf, it is necessary for a man to do two things:

1. Al-Idhtebaa' from the beginning of Tawaf until the end. Al-Idhtebaa' means placing the middle of one's Reda' ⁹¹ under his right arm and the ends of it over his left shoulder.

When he has finished performing Tawaf, he may return his Reda' to its original state because the time for Idhtebaa' is only during Tawaf.

2. Al-Raml during the first three circuits. Al-Raml means speeding up one's pace with small steps. A pilgrim should walk at a normal pace during his last four circuits.

When he completes seven circuits of Tawaf, he approaches Maqaam Ibrahim⁹² and recites:

"And take ye the station of Abraham as a place of Prayer".

[Surah al Baqarah(2):125]

He prays two short Raka'ats, as close as conveniently possible, behind Maqaam Ibrahim. During the first raka'ah he recites Surah al-Kaafirun⁹³ and during the second one Surah al-Ikhlaas⁹⁴.

⁹⁰ A monument in Mina.

⁹¹ The upper cloth of Ihram.

⁹² The stepping stone of the prophet Abraham.

⁹³ Chapter 109 of the Qur'aan.

⁹⁴ Chapter 112 of the Qur'aan.

When he completes the two raka'ats he should go to drink from the zam zam and pour it on his body, afterwhich he should return to the Black Stone and touch it, if convenient. He goes out to the Mesa'a⁹⁵ and when he nears As-Safaa⁹⁶ he recites:

"Verily As-Safaa and Al-Marwah are among the Emblems of Allah".

[Surah al-Baqarah (2):158]

He ascends As-Safaa until he is able to see the Ka'bah. Facing the Ka'bah and raising his hands, he praises Allah and makes any supplications he chooses. The Prophet (S.A.W.) prayed thus: *"There is no Deity but Allah alone"*, three times, supplicating in between.

He descends As-Safaa and heads for Al-Marwah⁹⁷ at a normal pace until he reaches the green marker. He should then run fast until the next green marker. He continues toward Al-Marwah at a normal pace. When he reaches it, he ascends it, faces the Qiblah⁹⁸, raises his hands and repeats what he said on As-Safaa. He descends Al-Marwah heading towards As-Safaa, taking care to walk where walking is designated, and run where running is designated. He continues this procedure until he completes seven laps. Going from As-Safaa to Al-Marwah is a lap and returning is another lap.

During his Sa'i he may recite what he wills of supplications, recitation of Qur'aan, and mentioning Allah.

On completion of Sa'i he shaves his head. A woman clips her hair the length of a finger tip. Shaving is preferable, except when Hajj is near and there isn't sufficient time for hair to grow back. In this case it's best to clip so that hair will remain for shaving during Hajj.

⁹⁵ The stretch between As-Safaa and Al-Marwah.

⁹⁶ Name of the hillock where a Muslim ends his last lap of Sa'yi.

⁹⁷ Name of the hillock where a Muslim begins Sa'yi.

⁹⁸ The direction Muslims face to pray.

With that, Umrah is completed, and a pilgrim is free to dress in other clothing, wear perfume and engage in marital relations, etc.

The Hajj

Once again by bathing as he did before Umrah in the place in which he is staying, if convenient, he puts on his Ihram and says:

“Labbayk-Allahumma Hajjan”

Meaning: Here I am at Your service, O Allah, for Hajj⁹⁹.

After that the worshipper should say the talbeeyah as it is said for Umrah.

If he fears that something will prevent him from completing his Hajj he should make a condition when he makes his intentions, saying:

"If I am prevented by any obstacle my place is wherever I am held up."

If he has no such fear, he doesn't make this condition.

A pilgrim goes to Mina and there prays Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha and Fajr, shortening his four unit prayers so as to make them two units each, without combining them.

When the sun rises, he goes to Arafah¹⁰⁰ (on the 9th day of Dhul-Hijja¹⁰¹) and there prays Dhuhr and Asr combined at the time of Dhuhr, making each one two units. He remains in Namira Mosque¹⁰² until sunset. He remembers Allah and makes as many supplications as possible while facing the Qiblah.

⁹⁹ This is the only occasion on which it is allowed to make the intention by saying it aloud.

¹⁰⁰ The most important stop during Hajj, located beyond Muzdalifah.

¹⁰¹ The twelfth month of the Islaamic calendar.

¹⁰² A Mosque in Mina.

The Prophet (may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) prayed thus:

"There is no Deity but Allah alone. He has no partner. All dominion and praise are His and He is powerful over all things."

If he grows weary it is permissible for him to engage in beneficial conversation with his companions or reading what he can find of beneficial books, especially those concerning Allah's grace and abundant gifts. This will strengthen his hope in Allah.

He should then return to his supplications and be sure to spend the end of the day deep in supplication because the best of supplication is the supplication of the day of Arafah.

At sunset he goes from Arafah to Muzdalifah¹⁰³ and there prays Maghrib, Isha, and Fajr. If he is tired or has little water, it is permissible for him to combine Maghrib and Isha. If he fears that he will not reach Muzdalifah until after midnight, he should pray before he reaches it for it is not permissible to delay prayer until after midnight. He remains there, in Muzdalifah, making supplications and remembering Allah till just before sunrise.

If he is weak and cannot handle the crowd during Ar-Ramy¹⁰⁴, it is permissible for him to go to Mina at the end of the night to stone the Jamrah before the arrival of the crowd.

Near sunrise, a pilgrim goes from Muzdalifah to Mina. Upon reaching it he does the following:

- a) He throws seven consecutive pebbles at Jamrah Al-Aqaba which is the closest monument to Makkah, saying: "Allah is the Greatest", as he throws each pebble.

¹⁰³ One of the ceremonial shrines of Hajj, between Mina and Arafah.

¹⁰⁴ The Stoning.

- b) He slaughters the sacrificial animal, eats some of it, and gives some to the poor. Slaughter is obligatory on the Mutamati¹⁰⁵ and Qiran.
- c) He shaves or clips his hair; shaving is preferable. A woman clips her hair the length of a finger tip.

These three should be done in the above order if convenient, but there is no restriction if one precedes another.

With that, one is allowed to come out of Ihram. He can wear other clothing and do everything that was lawful before Ihram except engaging in marital relations.

He goes to Makkah to perform Tawaf Al-Ifadha¹⁰⁶ and Sa'i, also for Hajj. It is sunnah to put perfume on before going to Makkah.

With the completion of this Tawaf and Sa'i, a pilgrim is allowed to do everything that was lawful before Ihram, including engaging in marital relations.

After performing Tawaf and Sa'i, he returns to Mina to spend the nights of the eleventh and twelfth days there. He stones the three Jamrah in the afternoon of both the eleventh and twelfth days. He starts with the first Jamrah, which is furthest from Makkah, then the middle one, and lastly Jamrah Al-Aqaba. Each one should be stoned with seven consecutive pebbles accompanied by Takbeer¹⁰⁷. He stops after the first and middle Jamrah to make supplications facing the Qiblah. It is not permissible to stone before noon on these two days. It is best to walk to the Jamrah, but riding is permissible.

If he is in a hurry after stoning on the twelfth day, he leaves Mina before sunset. But if he wishes to prolong his stay, which is best,

¹⁰⁵ A pilgrim performing Hajj Tamattu'.

¹⁰⁶ Tawaf for Hajj.

¹⁰⁷ Saying "Allahu Akbar" ("Allah is Greatest").

he spends the night of the thirteenth in Mina and stones that afternoon in the same manner as on the twelfth day.

When he is ready to return to his country, he makes Tawaf Al-Wadaa¹⁰⁸, which is seven circuits around the Ka'bah. Menstruating women and women experiencing postnatal discharge are not obligated to perform Tawaf Al-Wadaa.

Visiting the Prophet's Mosque

1. A pilgrim goes to Madina before or after Hajj with the intention of visiting the Prophet's Mosque and praying in it. Prayer there is better than a thousand prayers elsewhere except in the Holy Mosque in Makkah.
2. Upon reaching the Mosque he prays two Raka'ats of salutation or performs any obligatory prayer that is due.
3. It is recommended to perform two raka'ats of prayer in *Raoda*, a place in-between the Prophet's *mimbar* (pulpit) and grave.
4. He goes to the grave of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and he stands before it. He greets him saying:

" May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you, oh Prophet. May Allah grant you a good reward on behalf of your people. "

He takes a step or two to his right to position himself before Abu-Bakr¹⁰⁹ and greets him saying:

"May the peace, mercy, and blessing of Allah be upon you. O Abu-Bakr, Caliph of the Messenger of Allah. May Allah be pleased with you and grant you a good reward on behalf of Muhammad's people."

¹⁰⁸ Farewell Tawaf.

¹⁰⁹ An eminent disciple of the Prophet and the first Muslim Caliph.

Then he takes a step or two to his right to position himself before Umar¹¹⁰ and greets him saying:

" May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you, O Umar, Prince of the believers. May Allah be pleased with you and grant you a good reward on behalf of Muhammad's people."

5. In a state of purity, he goes to pray in Qubaa Mosque¹¹¹.
6. He goes to Al-Baqee¹¹² to visit Uthman's¹¹³ grave (may Allah be pleased with him). He stands before it and greets him saying:

"May the peace, mercy and blessing of Allah be upon you, O Uthman Prince of the believers. May Allah be pleased with you and grant you a good reward on behalf of Muhammad's people."

He greets all other Muslims in Al-Baqee.

7. He goes to Uhud¹¹⁴ and visits the grave of Hamza¹¹⁵ (may Allah be pleased with him) and the other martyrs there with him. He greets them and prays to Allah to grant them forgiveness, mercy, and pleasure.

Notification

¹¹⁰ Another eminent disciple of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), and the second Muslim caliph.

¹¹¹ A Mosque in Madina, which used to be on the outskirts.

¹¹² A place in Madina.

¹¹³ The third Muslim Caliph and also an eminent disciple of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

¹¹⁴ The name of a mountain in Medina and the site of the battle by this name.

¹¹⁵ One of Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W.) uncles and a martyr at the battle of Uhud.

The following is incumbent upon the Muhrim¹¹⁶ for Hajj or Umrah:

1. That he be committed to Allah's religious obligations upon him such as prayer in its time (in congregation for men).
2. That he avoids what Allah has prohibited such as obscenity, inequity, and disobedience.

Allah, Blessed and Most High, says:

“If anyone undertakes Hajj therein. Let there be no obscenity, nor wickedness, nor wrangling during Hajj”

[Surah al-Baqarah (20:197)]

3. That he avoids harming the Muslims with words or actions within the Masha'ir¹¹⁷ or elsewhere.
4. That he avoids all of the restrictions of Ihram:
 - a. He shouldn't cause the loss of any of his hair or nails. A prick by a thorn and the like is unobjectionable, even if there is bleeding.
 - b. He shouldn't perfume himself, his clothing, his food or his drink after entering Ihram. He should also abstain from cleansing himself with scented soap. There is no harm in what remains of the effect of perfume used prior to Ihram.
 - c. He shouldn't touch, kiss, etc. his spouse out of passion and, even worse, shouldn't have sexual intercourse.
 - d. He shouldn't be wed or propose to a woman for himself or others.

¹¹⁶ A person in Ihram.

¹¹⁷ Ceremonial shrines.

- e. He shouldn't wear gloves, although there is no harm in wrapping the hands in cloth. This ruling goes for both men and women.

The Following Pertains Specifically To Men

- a) He cannot cover his head with something that touches it, although there is no harm in the use of an umbrella, the roof of a car or tent for shade. There is also no harm in carrying his baggage atop his head.
- b) He cannot wear a shirt, turban, hooded cloak trousers, or shoes. Only if he is unable to obtain an *Ezaar*¹¹⁸ or sandals can he wear trousers or shoes.
- c) He cannot wear anything with the same qualities of the above mentioned such as an Abaya¹¹⁹, Qubaa, hat, undershirt, etc.

It is permissible for him to wear sandals, rings, glasses, a hearing aid, a watch worn on his wrist or hung from his neck, or a speech aid. It is permissible for him to cleanse himself with unscented cleansers and to wash and scratch his head and body, even if some of his hair falls unintentionally. In such a case there is no obligation on him because of it.

A woman cannot wear a Niqab¹²⁰ or Burqa¹²¹. The sunnah is for her to uncover her face except if men not related to her might see her, in which case it is obligatory for her to cover her face during Ihram and otherwise.

¹¹⁸ Lower cloth of Ihram.

¹¹⁹ Cloak like, woolen wrap.

¹²⁰ A face veil revealing the eyes through slashes)

¹²¹ A face veil like a Niqab.

CHAPTER NINE

THE CALL TO JIHAAD

Beloved brothers and sisters, as we have mentioned earlier, Islaam has five pillars. However, if there would have been a sixth pillar of Islaam, it would have been *Jihaad*. This is due to the fact that jihaad occupies a central position in Islaam.

The noble Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The head of the matter is Islaam, and its peak is jihaad.”

[Tirmidhi]

He, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

“Paradise has one hundred grades which Allah has reserved for the Mujahideen¹²² who fight in His cause, and the distance between each two grades is like the distance between the heaven and the earth.”

[Bukhari]

Jihaad is often translated as holy fighting in the cause of Allah. It means striving in the cause of Allah in defense of the Truth, and for uplifting the banner of Islaam.

The prayer, fasting, alms giving, and pilgrimage are not meant to please Allah by their mere outward observance. These acts of worship which are so important that they are described as the pillars of Islaam, have in fact being ordained to prepare us for a greater purpose, and to train us for a greater duty. This all-important duty is what is called Jihaad.

¹²² Singular: Mujahid – A person who strives in the cause of Allah.

Jihaad is an all-encompassing duty which requires faith, sacrifice, patience, discipline, self-control, etc., to mention but a few.

By Jihaad Islaam is established, Allah's word is made supreme, His religion (Islaam) is propagated, the rights and honour of the Muslims are protected, the rulership of man over man, which is often characterized by corruption, oppression, repression, and moral depravity, is abolished, and the system of Allah is established on earth. By abandoning jihaad (may Allah protect us from that) Islaam is destroyed and the Muslims fall into an inferior position; their honour is lost, their lands are stolen, and their rule and authority vanish. Therefore, jihaad is an obligatory duty in Islaam on every Muslim, and he who tries to escape this duty, dies with one of the qualities of a hypocrite.

In the words of the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace be upon him:

“Anyone who dies without having gone out for jihaad in the cause of Allah, and without having the intention to do so, such a person died while having one of the qualities of hypocrisy.”

[Muslim]

Jihaad is a test of true faith. What is worth living for is certainly worth dying for. But only a person who is truly convinced about his cause or mission, and who sincerely hopes that he will be rewarded for sacrificing for that cause, will be ready to lay down his life for it. A hypocrite, on the other hand, is not convinced about his cause, so he would not sacrifice even an egg, let alone his life, for it.

A true Muslim must be prepared at all times to defend the Truth and stand by it, even in the battle field. He finds no difficulty in surrendering his all (including his life) for Allah, because he

knows that his life and all that he owns are for Allah. Hence he never betrays the Truth.

Allah, the Almighty and All-Wise, says:

“Verily Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their property for (the price) that theirs shall be Paradise. They fight in Allah’s Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him (Allah) in the Taurat and the Injeel and the Qur’aan. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.”

[Surah at-Tawbah (9): 111]

Allah, the Exalted in Might, also says:

“And surely, We shall try you till We test those who strive hard (for the Cause of Allah) and the patient ones, and We shall test your facts (i.e. the one who is a liar, and the one who is truthful).”

[Surah Muhammad (47): 31]

Corrupt rule is the root of all the evils that litter the earth today. No amount of Mosque or Church sermons, newspaper articles and editorials can stop the vices in the world today – like adultery, fornication, homosexuality, prostitution, lewdness, bribery and corruption, oppression, looting and polluting of public treasuries, perjury, etc. These vices can only be eradicated on a governmental basis, by enacting laws which prohibit them and punish its perpetrators. But most unfortunately, government officials are the foremost in perpetrating these evil acts today. World over, governments are in the hands of despotic and draconian rulers who have little or no regard for God; rather they assume the status of God over their subjects as soon as they seize power.

Therefore, only a government that is based on God's laws can deliver the world from its present shambles, and bring the much needed succor to the society and humanity at large. A government whose legislators, executives, judiciary and law enforcement agents are made up of God conscious people. A government that will govern on God's earth with God's laws, and not man-made laws. In truth, the struggle to abolish the lordship of man over man and establish this kind of government that is based on Divine Guidance is the real jihaad.

Unfortunately, however, the concept of jihaad has often been ignorantly and, in most cases, deliberately misconstrued by the non-Muslims, especially in the western world. With the aid of their propaganda machines (the CNN, BBC, VOA, etc.), they portray jihaad to mean uncoordinated radicalism, and a means by which the Muslims compel people to accept Islaam. They do this in order to blackmail Islaam and the Muslims, so as to turn the world against Islaam. This is because they see Islaam as the only threat to their corrupt and immoral system which they call civilization. A system in which homosexual rights is given more attention and focus than respect for parents. A system in which the rich nations further impoverish the poor and starving nations through loans based on outrageous interests that cannot be repaid even till the Day of Resurrection. A system in which children are raised up without regard for morals. A system in which girls feel proud and honoured when naked, and feel ashamed and deprived when covered. And even more preposterous, a system in which women, who are supposed to occupy the respectable position of being mothers, are reduced to mere tools for gratifying sexual desires and for advertisements. In fact if any commodity is to be advertised – e.g. toilet soap, perfumes, tinned tomatoes, tyres, cigarette, yoghurt etc. – naked girls must be used otherwise the commodity won't sell. Whereas if a man was to be used for that same purpose, he would wear nice shirts and trousers, with nice shoes to match. What a shameful and appalling system!

For their selfish reasons of safeguarding this evil and corrupt system, they slander Islaam and the Muslims, describe the Muslims with derogatory and defaming names (like terrorists, fundamentalists, extremists, etc.), and they attack Muslim lands and slaughter the Muslims (men, women and children). The strategy is that in order to kill a dog, you have to give it a bad name.

The only way to pay these enemies of good in their own coins, and salvage the world from the present abyss they have thrown it into, is to establish jihaad in the cause of Allah, the Most High.

Allah, the Almighty and All-Wise, says:

“Fighting (in Allah’s cause) is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 216]

“And fight them until there is no more *fitnah* (evil, corruption, polytheism etc.), and all worship is for Allah (Alone).”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 193]

Importantly, as a way of refuting the western propaganda against jihaad, we must state here that jihaad has no room for uncoordinated radicalism or indiscriminate killings.

Allah, the Lord of mankind and all that exists, says:

“And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly Allah likes not the transgressors.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 190]

More so, the basic principle of faith in Islaam does not permit anyone to compel another to accept Islaam. True faith, as we have explained earlier in this book, must originate from the heart, and manifest into words and actions.

Allah, Exalted be He, says in the Glorious Qur'aan:

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in *Taghut* (i.e. all false deities) and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 256]

“And say: “The Truth is from your Lord.” Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the *Zalimun* (polytheists and wrong-doers), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them.”

[Surah al-Kahf (18): 29]

“And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed, all of them together. So will you then compel mankind, until they become believers. It is not for any person to believe, except by the leave of Allah, and He will put the wrath on those who are heedless.”

[Surah Yunus (10): 99 – 100]

Finally, my dear brothers and sisters, I must seize this opportunity to remind you that the battle between truth and falsehood is never-ending. The only way to eradicate falsehood is to confront it head-on by every available means – intellectual, spiritual, and physical (with full force of number and weaponry). It is quite a demanding task. But even more demanding is the task of living with falsehood. We must not be like those who claim to be believers,

but they are most unwilling to march forth in the cause of Allah. They would rather march forth, and even lay down their lives, fighting for democracy, gay rights, or rights to pregnancy abortion. Such people are grossly misguided.

May Allah grant us steadfastness in His cause and victory over our enemies and the enemies of Islaam. (Ameen!)

CHAPTER TEN

IMPORTANT ADVISES FOR A NEW MUSLIM

The following are some important advises for a new Muslim, and indeed every Muslim, to guide him to success in this world, as well as the Hereafter:

1. Islaam is a religion based on knowledge. All acts of worship in Islaam, and indeed a Muslim's entire way of life, are guided by certain prescribed rules and principles, which must be applied in order to be a true Muslim. Unlike in Christianity, where one may be a strong Christian, a prayer warrior, or even a miracle-worker without knowing anything of the Bible, knowledge is a major requirement for piety in Islaam. Allah, Blessed and Most High, says in this regard:

“It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah.”

[Surah al-Faatir (35):28]

He, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, also says:

“Allah will exalt in rank those from among you who believe and those to whom knowledge is given.”

[Surah al-Mujadilah (58):11]

One may enter into Islaam with ignorance, but certainly cannot remain in Islaam with ignorance. The explanation to this is that it is not a crime to be a child, but it is a crime to remain a child and never grow. So make frantic efforts to acquire the knowledge of Islaam.

Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said the following on the importance of seeking knowledge:

“For him who treads a path for seeking knowledge, Allah will ease the way to Paradise.”

[Muslim]

“The seeking of knowledge is compulsory on every Muslim (male and female).”

[Bukhari]

“He who issues forth in search of knowledge is busy in the cause of Allah till he returns from his quest.”

[Tirmidhi]

“A believer never has his fill of knowledge till he ends up in Paradise.”

[Tirmidhi]

In describing the superiority of a knowledgeable person over an ordinary worshipper, the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“A knowledgeable one is as much above a worshipper (not possessing knowledge) as I am above the least of you. Allah, His angels and all those in the heavens and the earth, even the ants in their heaps and the fish in the water, calls blessings on those who instruct people in beneficial knowledge.”

[Tirmidhi]

2. Obtain a copy of the Qur’aan in a language you understand (e.g. Yoruba, Hausa, English, French, etc.) and devote a daily session to read and study it, while you, simultaneously, learn the Qur’aan in its original Arabic language.

The noble Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The best of you is he who learns the Qur’aan and teaches it.”

[Bukhari]

As you read the Qur’aan, take your time to ponder upon the messages contained in it. In the Qur’aan, Allah classifies those who commit certain acts, or possess certain beliefs, into different groups – e.g. *Kaafiroon* (disbelievers), *Zaalimoon* (wrong doers), *Faasiqoon* (evil doers), *Mu’minoos* (believers), *Saadiqoon* (truthful), etc. Access yourself sincerely and find out for your self which group you belong. If you fall into a bad group, then repent to your Lord and seek His forgiveness, for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. But if you fall into a good class, then strive harder in the cause of Allah and be mindful of satan’s whispers so that you may remain humble and not exalt yourself, or commit acts of showoff.

Allah, the Exalted in Might, says:

“So do not ascribe piety to yourselves. He (Allah) knows best him who fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him.”

[Surah an-Najm (53): 32]

3. Form the habit of reading Islaamic literatures. There are literatures available on a wide range of subjects: e.g. prayer, fasting, marriage, divorce, funeral rites, family and social life, government, jurisprudence, Qur’aanic commentaries, etc. Help yourself with them. Read, completely, at least one literature in a week. This will greatly improve your state of Islaam, and serve as a good way of spending your time.
4. As you acquire knowledge, put them into practice. True knowledge is that which translates into action. The knowledge which does not translate into action may only be evidence

against you on the Day of Judgment. Knowledge must be complemented with righteous deeds for it to be beneficial.

5. You are the company you keep, so always keep company of the pious believers. They will help you grow in faith, and they will always be there to check you from transgressing or backsliding. Indeed, they will make a positive influence in your life.

Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful, says:

“O you who believe! Fear Allah and keep company of those who are true (in words and deeds).”

[Surah at-Taubah (9): 119]

6. Attend, regularly, Islaamic gatherings (e.g. lectures, symposia, study circles, marriages, ceremonies, outings, etc.). It will give you a sense of belonging and accelerate your growth in the faith and in knowledge.
7. Attend to your prayers regularly and at their prescribed times. The prayers are better performed in the Mosques, congregationally, except for the supererogatory prayers.
8. Know that whatever you do, you are noticed; and as a Muslim, your actions are translated as Islaam by your onlookers. So be a good ambassador of Islaam, and lead a moral life.

Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“The heaviest thing which will be put on the believers’ scale (on the Day of Resurrection) will be good morals.”

[Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi]

Similarly, the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

“The fear of Allah and good morals are the two major characteristics which lead to Paradise.”

[Tirmidhi]

9. Be modest in your speech, and keep silence when there is no need to speak. Know that nothing is opened more mistakenly than the mouth. Your speech, to a large extent, determines your personality and the respect people will accord you.

Allah, the Exalted in Might, says:

“O you who believe! Revere Allah and say just words. He will then rectify your deeds and forgive you your sins. He who obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.”

[Surah al-Ahzaab (33): 70-71]

The noble Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“Whosoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or keep silent.”

[Bukhari]

He, blessings and peace be upon him, also said:

“Keeping silent is considered as an act of wisdom, but very few practice it”.

[Baihaqi]

10. Be modest also in your dressing and appearance. To a very large extent, your inner-self is a function of your outward appearance. Also, your appearance speaks volumes for you before anything else. Do not tailor your dresses to resemble the disbelievers, all in the name of fashion. Rather, put on dresses that will give you easy Islaamic identity. The Muslim sisters should observe their *hijab* (Islaamic head cover for women) always as it is required of them, and not only during salaah.

11. Time management is one of the most important aspects of Islaam, and indeed a man's life. People say time is money. But in Islaam it is actually worth much more than money – Time is life! Money spent could be recovered, but time spent can never be recovered. It only brings you that same amount of time spent closer to your grave. So, spend your time wisely – it is the most precious possession you have.

In order to instill in us the importance of time, Allah swears by time in the Qur'aan. He, the Exalted in Might and Ever Majestic, says:

“By Al-‘Asr (the time). Verily, man is in loss. Except those who believe (in Islaamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience.

[Surah al-Asr (103): 1-3]

12. Make your heart always inclined to the Masjid (Mosque). The Masaajid (mosques) are the houses of Allah.

The noble prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said:

“Whoever comes to the Masjid, he is like a guest who intends to visit Allah, and Allah honours His guest.”¹²³

[Mazari]

13. Be hardworking. Paradise has no room for lazy people.
14. The road may be rough. You may face stiff opposition from your friends and relatives. But at all times be steadfast and always remember Allah – you will find Him ever at your aid.

¹²³ The Hadith was quoted in “Reminders For People of understanding”, by Imtiaz Ahmad, M. Sc., M. Phil (London).

Some may desert you, brand you an infidel, or even prophesy doom for you. Again be steadfast. Allah is sufficient as the Disposer of your affairs.

Allah, Blessed and Most High, says:

“Verily, those who say: ‘Our Lord is Allah (Alone)’, and then they stand firm (steadfast), on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): ‘fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of paradise which you have been promised! We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. There in you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask. An entertainment from (Allah), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful’ ”.

[Surah Fussilat (41): 30 – 32]

15. Finally, know that you do no one any favour by accepting Islaam than your own self. So be ever thankful to Allah for His favours upon you, and for guiding you to the light, i.e. Islaam.

I pray Allah, the Most Merciful of all who show mercy, to establish our hearts and feet firm in His Path. And may He make the religion of Islaam easy for us all to practice and propagate. (Ameen!)

Glory be to You O Allah! I cannot eulogize You enough. You are as You have praised Yourself. Exalted is Your Majesty.

Completed with Allah’s praise and the best of His help.
Was-Salaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh!!!

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