1 LEVEL

Aqeedah

Islamic Creed

العبيكان للتعليم
Obeikan Education

ENGLISH EDITION

Aqeedah

Islamic Creed

Level 1

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Preface

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, and upon all his family and Companions. To proceed:

Islamic knowledge is one of the most important necessities that the Muslim needs in his life; the entire ummah, in its efforts to rebuild Islamic civilization, is in need of it. Hence the religious texts point out the importance of Islamic knowledge and its bearers. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge – [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise}* [Aal Imran 3:18]. Ash-Shawkani رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: What is meant by those of knowledge here is the scholars of the Quran and Sunnah. And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge"}* [Ta-Ha 20:114].

In the hadith it says: **«Whoever follows a path seeking knowledge thereby, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.»** Narrated by Muslim.

This series of textbooks comes to serve the community, with the aim of conveying Islamic knowledge by various methods and making it readily available to those who seek it. We hope that it will be another source of knowledge for academic programs and that it will be a support and help to those who want to acquire more Islamic knowledge and education, in an effort to achieve the main goal, which is to spread and instill sound Islamic knowledge on a sound academic foundation and in accordance with correct beliefs, based on the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, in a modern and easily-understood style. We ask Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to grant us all beneficial knowledge, enable us to do righteous deeds, guide us and help us to be sincere in our efforts.

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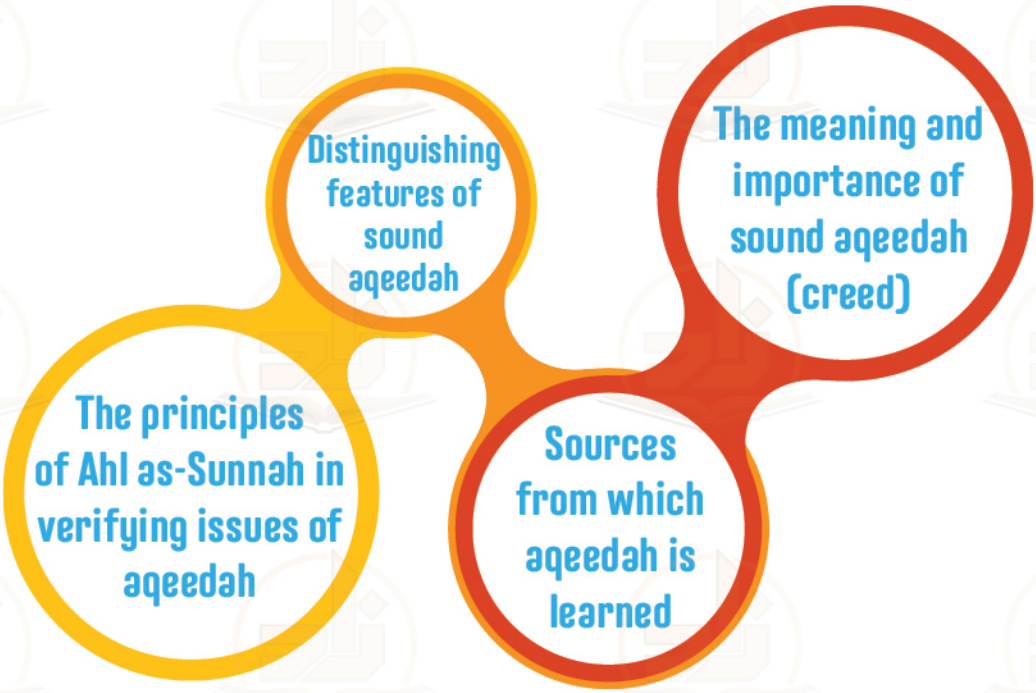
The Zad
Academy Series

Aqeedah
Islamic Creed
Level 1

1

Introduction to sound aqeedah

In this unit we will study



Introduction to sound aqeedah:

The meaning and importance of sound aqeedah

Definition of sound aqeedah:

In linguistic terms, the word aqeedah is derived from the word al-aqd, which refers to tying, securing and pulling with strength.

Aqd (tying) is the opposite of hall (undoing). From the same root comes the word uqdah which is used in the phrases uqdat al-yamin (binding oath) and uqdat an-nikah (the tie of marriage). Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you intended ['aqqadtum] of oaths}* [al-Ma'idah 5:89].

Synonyms of aqeedah:

There are several other names for Islamic aqeedah (belief, doctrine, creed) that were mentioned by the salaf (early generations). They include: Tawhid, Sunnah, usul ad-deen (principles of religion), al-fiqh al-akbar, sharia and eeman.

In Islamic terminology, aqeedah refers to "the ruling that is not subject to any doubts for the one who believes in it."

Some defined it as: "The issues that are proven and definitive, that one holds in one's heart as true and does not doubt them."

Sound (sahih) means that it is free from all faults and errors.

Definition of sound aqeedah:

It is firm belief in Allah and what one should believe about Him in terms of His divinity, His Lordship and His names and attributes. It also implies belief in His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and His decree, both good and bad; as well as everything that is mentioned in the sound religious texts of principles of religion, matters of the unseen and whatever we are told about the unseen.

It is essential to believe in one's heart in a definitive manner, with no doubt or uncertainty, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{The believers are only the ones who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and then doubt not}* [al-Hujurat 49:15]. That is, they never doubted their faith.

The evidence for that is as follows:

1

The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah , the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets}* [al-Baqarah 2:177].

2

The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers}* [al-Baqarah 2:285].

3

The hadith of Umar ibn al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, according to which Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ asked the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about faith (eeman), and he said to him: **«It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in the divine decree, both good and bad».** Narrated by Muslim.

The importance of aqeedah:

The importance of sound aqeedah is seen in the following points:

1

It is the condition of righteous deeds being acceptable to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. It is a means – after the mercy of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ – of attaining salvation in the hereafter and admittance to Paradise, as He says: *{So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone}* [al-Kahf 18:110] and *{Allah has promised the believing men and believing women gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally, and pleasant dwellings in gardens of perpetual residence; but approval from Allah is greater. It is that which is the great attainment}* [at-Tawbah 9:72].

In contrast to that, deeds will not be accepted by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ if the doer has corrupt aqeedah, and therefore that will be his loss in the Hereafter, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And whoever denies the faith - his work has become worthless, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers}* [al-Ma'idah 5:5] and *{And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allah, your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers}* [az-Zumar 39:65].

What is meant by *{his work has become worthless}* in the first verse and *{your work would surely become worthless}* in the second verse is that the deeds are rendered null and void, and the reward for them is lost. Therefore, they will carry no weight before Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and the doer will become a loser and will not gain anything in the Hereafter.

2

It is the core of the message of all of the messengers عليهم السلام. There is no messenger whom Allah sent to his people but this sound belief was the first thing to which he called them; the messengers paid a great deal of attention to that, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid Taghut"}* [an-Nahl 16:36].

Benefit

Taghut refers to anything and anyone that is worshipped besides Allah and approves of that.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me"}* [al-Anbiya 21:25].

3

Aqeedah is essential to the human being; it is more essential to him than air and water, for without it he cannot know the correct and sound answers to the greatest questions posed by humanity:

Where did I come from? Why was I created? Where will I go after death?

What is the outcome of not having an answer to these questions?

It is what we see today of misery, suffering, widespread mental illness, and rising suicide rates, even in wealthy countries which claim to be advanced and civilized, as is happening in countries such as Sweden, Denmark and others.

Only sound aqeedah answers these important questions and other questions that people wonder about and sincerely try to find answers to, so that their hearts will be filled with certainty, tranquility, ease, assurance and faith.

4

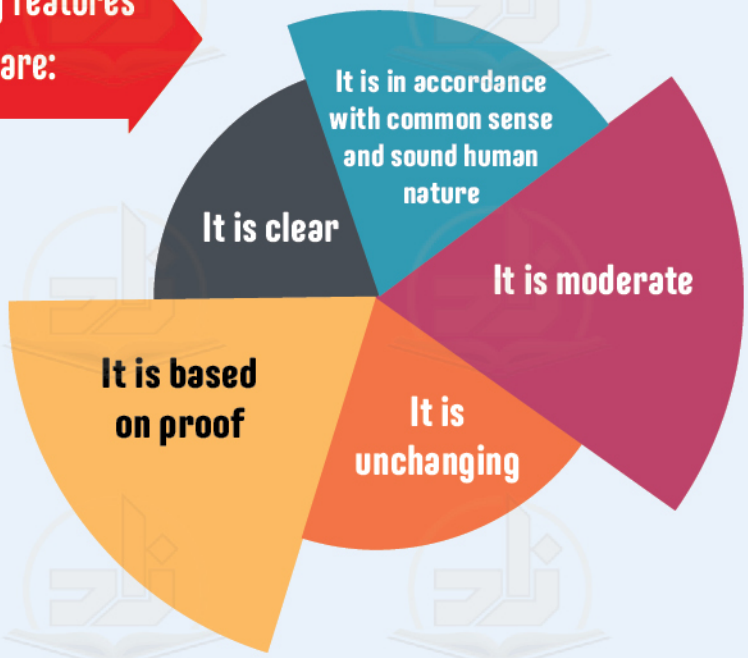
It is the means of attaining a sense of security and guidance in this world and the Hereafter, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice – those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided}* [al-An'am 6:82]. What is meant by the words *{and do not mix their belief with injustice}* is: they do not mix their faith with shirk.

Hence what we see today of the lack of any sense of security, and the spread of evil, corruption, turmoil and killing in the Muslim world in general, and in the Arab world in particular, is the result of people not adhering to sound aqeedah, or of the prevalence of belief in that which contradicts it or differs from it in words and deeds, as we shall explain below.

5

It is a means of abundant blessings coming from heaven and earth, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth}* [al-A'raf 7:96].

The distinguishing features of sound aqeedah are:



The distinguishing features of sound aqeedah are:

Sound Islamic aqeedah is distinguished from the beliefs of false religions and groups who introduced innovations (bidah) by several features that make it more acceptable to people, including the following:

1. It is a clear and straightforward belief, with nothing complex about it. There is nothing mysterious in it, and no aspects of it are exclusively for the clergy to understand.

2. It is a common-sense belief that is in harmony with innate human nature, and is not contrary to it.

3. It is an unchanging belief that does not alter or develop with the passage of time. There is no room to add or subtract anything, and it is not subject to distortion or alteration. As for other beliefs, things have been added to them and subtracted from them, because they were subject to the whims and desires of rulers and monks.

4. It produces clear proof and evidence for every issue. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "With Allah is the far-reaching argument"}* [al-An'am 6:149].

5. It is a moderate belief which does not go to any extremes, and in which there is no exaggeration or heedlessness.

Sources of sound aqeedah:

We have seen above **the definition and importance of sound aqeedah**. Here we will learn about something that is of the utmost importance, which is: **from where do we learn this aqeedah? This is what is called "the sources from which aqeedah is learned." What are these sources? And what is the evidence for them?**

Before we speak about the sources and the evidence for them, we will point out a definitive Islamic fact, which is that sound aqeedah (belief in the oneness of Allah) is a common-sense belief that is in accordance with innate human nature, meaning the principle that all humans instinctively believe in this aqeedah, and that since Allah created humans and brought them into existence on this earth, they have held this belief in their hearts. What that means is knowing Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, believing in His oneness, turning to Him at times of hardship, and loving Him; it means that man has an innate inclination to accept and choose the truth. This is supported by a great deal of evidence, including the following:

1

The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah . That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know}* [ar-Rum 30:30].

Haneefiyyah (referred to in the translation above as "inclining to truth") is Islam and its pillars, as was explained by the leading scholars of the early generations رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ.

The fitrah is sound human nature which is created in people and which has the ability to accept the true religion.

2

The report narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, according to which the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Every newborn is born in a state of fitrah, then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian, just as animals bring forth animals; do you see any deformed one among them?».**

According to another version: **«There is no child who is not born in a state of fitrah, then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian, just as animals bring forth animals with their limbs intact; do you see any deformed one among them?».**

The word translated here as intact refers to one that is complete and has all its limbs. **The word translated here as deformed** refers to one that is missing limbs.

Then Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ recited the words: *{[Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah . That is the correct religion}* [ar-Rum 30:30]. Agreed upon.

3

The report narrated by Muslim from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in two different versions, in which it clearly states that the fitrah is the religion of Islam. They are:

a. «There is no newborn who is born except he is a believer in this Religion».

b. «There is no newborn who is born except he is a believer in this Religion, until he begins to speak».

4

It was narrated from Iyad ibn Himar al-Mujashi'i رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said in his khutbah one day: **«[Allah said:] 'And I have created My slaves with an inclination towards the truth (hunafa), all of them, but the devils come to them and drive them away from their religion, forbidding them that which I have permitted to them and instructing them to associate with Me that for which I have not sent down any authority'».** Narrated by Muslim.

The word hunafa **(sing. hanif)**, translated here as "with an inclination towards the truth", refers to one who inclines away from all other religions and inclines towards the sound religion of Islam.

Sources of sound aqeedah

The first source 1 The Noble Quran

The Noble Quran is a name for the miraculous words of Allah that were revealed to His slave and Messenger Muhammad ﷺ, of whom Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{ The Trustworthy Spirit has brought it down Upon your heart, [O Muhammad] - that you may be of the warners In a clear Arabic language}* [ash-Shu'ara 26:193-195].

Evidence:

A great deal of evidence indicates that the Quran constitutes proof from which we must take our aqeedah. That evidence includes the following:

1. The Quran instructs us to follow its commands and forbids us to follow anything else, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Follow, [O mankind], what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies. Little do you remember}* [al-A'raf 7:3].

2. Everything in it is sound and true, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{That is [deserved by them] because Allah has sent down the Book in truth. And indeed, those who differ over the Book are in extreme dissension}* [al-Baqarah 2:176]; *{Say, "Allah has told the truth"}* [Aal Imran 3:95]; *{And who is more truthful than Allah in statement}* [an-Nisa 4:87]; *{and who is more truthful than Allah in statement}* [an-Nisa 4:122].

3. It is protected from tampering and distortion, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian}* [al-Hijr 15:9].

Evidence – continued:

4

It is the judge in which there is an explanation and clarification, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{[Say], "Then is it other than Allah I should seek as judge while it is He who has revealed to you the Book explained in detail?" And those to whom We [previously] gave the Scripture know that it is sent down from your Lord in truth, so never be among the doubters}* [al-An'am 6:114].

5

It is the criterion that distinguishes between truth and falsehood, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion upon His Servant that he may be to the worlds a warner}* [al-Furqan 25:1].

The Criterion (al-Furqan) is the Quran, because by means of it Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ differentiated (farraqa) between truth and falsehood.

6

Allah has instructed us to refer to it in the event of dispute or conflict, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result}* [an-Nisa 4:59] and *{And in anything over which you disagree – its ruling is [to be referred] to Allah}* [ash-Shura 42:10].

7

It is the definitive word which draws the line between what is in earnest and what is in jest, and it is the farthest removed from falsehood and tampering, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, the Qur'an is a decisive statement And it is not amusement}* [at-Tariq 86:13-14].

The sound Prophetic Sunnah

2 The second source

The sound (sahih) Prophetic Sunnah is that which is proven to be narrated from the Prophet ﷺ via a sound chain of narrators (isnad), including what is narrated from him of words, deeds, or what he approved of.

The evidence for that:

Many texts indicate that the prophetic Sunnah constitutes proof, and aqeedah must be taken from it. These texts include the following:

1. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from}* [al-Hashr 59:7].

2. The verse in which He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and obey Allah and His Messenger, if you should be believers}* [al-Anfal 8:1].

3. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought}* [an-Nahl 16:44].

4. It was narrated that Abu Rafi رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«I do not want to hear about a man to whom something of what I said is conveyed, either something that I enjoined or that I forbade, but he says, 'We do not know what this is; we have the Book of Allah and this is not in it'».** Narrated by the four except an-Nasai; classed as sahih by Ibn Hibban.

Evidence – continued

5

It was narrated that al-Miqdam ibn Ma'di Karib al-Kindi رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Indeed, I have been given the Book and something like it with it; indeed, I have been given the Quran and something like it with it».** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Arna'ut. **«and something like it with it»** means the Sunnah.

6

According to what was narrated by al-Irbad ibn Sariyah from him [the Prophet ﷺ said]: **«I urge you to adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the right-thinking, rightly-guided caliphs who come after me. Hold fast to it, and cling tight to it».** Narrated by Ahmad and by at-Tirmidhi, who classed it as sahih.

7

Scholarly consensus (ijma) also says that the prophetic Sunnah may be taken as evidence. Ash-Shafi'i said: "I do not know of anyone among the Sahabah or Tabieen who was told something about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, but he would accept his report, comply with it and affirm that what he heard was Sunnah".

The consensus of the righteous early generations

3 The third source

In linguistic terms, the word salaf refers to the early group, and what is past. A person's salaf is his early forefathers.

The salaf have a number of names, including the following:

Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah:

They are called Ahl as-Sunnah because of their adherence to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Al-Jama'ah refers to the fact that they are all united (ijtama'u) in following the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, and in adhering to the issues on which there is scholarly consensus (ijma).

The saved sect:

They are so called because they are saved from the Fire or from tribulations by their adherence to the Sunnah, as it says in the hadith of Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan رضي الله عنه, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«The People of the two Books are divided in terms of religious affiliation into seventy-two sects. This ummah will be divided into seventy-three sects – meaning following whims and desires – all of whom will be in the Fire except one, which is the main body of the Muslims (jama'ah)».** Narrated by Ahmad and by at-Tirmidhi; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

The prevailing group:

That is because they will prevail until the onset of the Hour, as the Prophet ﷺ said: **«A group of my ummah will continue to prevail and they will not be harmed by those who let them down until the Hour begins».** Narrated by Ahmad and by at-Tirmidhi, who classed it as sahih.

Evidence:

The evidence for the fact that the consensus of the scholars (ijma) is binding proof to which reference should be made with regard to aqeedah includes the following:

1. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers - We will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a destination}* [an-Nisa 4:115].

2. The report narrated from the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ by al-Irbad ibn Sariyah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, according to which he صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Whoever among you lives to see that, I urge them to adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the right-thinking, rightly-guided caliphs; hold fast to it».** Noted above.

3. It was narrated from Ibn Umar رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Indeed Allah will not cause my ummah – or the ummah of Muhammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ – to agree on misguidance. The hand of Allah is with the main body of the Muslims (jama'ah)».**

   Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Benefit

Reason (aql): by means of reason, one may comprehend some facts that are established by ilm al-aqeedah, such as the fact that Allah exists, and that He is one, ever-living, all-knowing of His creation, Almighty, wise, and the only one deserving of worship, to the exclusion of all others, and so on.

But it is not possible for reason on its own to find out and learn about the details of this branch of knowledge, because the details cannot be learned except from the texts of the Quran and Sunnah.

If there appears to be a contradiction between what may be understood from a proven, sound text and what may be understood on the basis of sound reasoning, then precedence must be given to the religious texts, for two reasons:

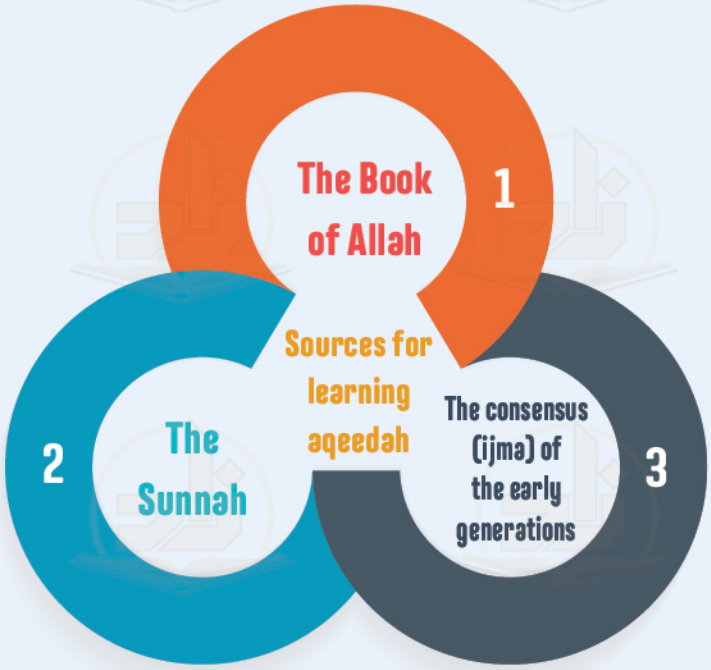
Firstly: because the text is not subject to change, whereas reason is subject to change.

Secondly: because what is proven from the text is infallible and is not subject to error, whereas reason is not like that.

What is meant by the sound religious texts is: the Noble Quran and the Sunnah that is proven to be soundly narrated from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

What is meant by sound reason is: that which is free from deviation and the influence of specious arguments.

Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: "What is learned through sound reasoning cannot be imagined that it would contradict the religious texts at all. Rather the sound religious texts cannot be contradicted by an argument that is reached through sound reasoning. I thought about that with regard to many issues concerning which the people argued, and I found that what contradicts the sound and clear religious texts is no more than specious arguments, which are known on the basis of reasoning to be false."



The basic principles set out by Ahl as-Sunnah for verifying issues of aqeedah

Ahl as-Sunnah have certain principles for verifying issues of aqeedah that make them stand out from the people of innovation and misguidance. They are as follows:

1 Believing in, submitting to and venerating the texts of the Quran and Sunnah, in contrast to the people of innovation and misguidance, who believe in some of the religious texts and reject others, on the basis of ignorance and whims and desires.

The evidence for this principle is abundant and includes the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error}* [al-Ahzab 33:36].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{The only statement of the [true] believers when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them is that they say, "We hear and we obey." And those are the successful}* [an-Nur 24:51].

c. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{O you who have believed, do not put [yourselves] before Allah and His Messenger but fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing}* [al-Hujurat 49:1].

d. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muhammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission}* [an-Nisa 4:65].

2

Putting together all the religious texts that speak of a particular issue, and seeking to understand them all together in accordance with sound methodology. This is in contrast to the people of innovation and misguidance, who follow a methodology other than that, so they rely on one or more texts, to the exclusion of other religious texts that discuss the same issue. Then they take that text to make it look as if it contradicts other principles and texts. Thus they follow the ambiguous texts.

The Prophet ﷺ warned against that. It was narrated from Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As رضي الله عنهما that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Take it easy, O people, for in this way the nations before you were doomed, because of their differing from their prophets and their quoting parts of the Books to contradict other parts. The Quran was not revealed so that parts of it could be used to contradict other parts; rather parts of it confirm other parts. Whatever you understand of it, then comply with it, and whatever you do not understand of it, refer it to someone who does understand it».** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Arna'ut.

3

Holding fast to the Quran and Sunnah, for they are guidance and light. This is in contrast to the way of the people of innovation and misguidance, **who rely on something other than the revelation, as is the case, for example, with the Sufis who regard the statements and dreams of their shaykhs as a source of Islamic teachings, and regard them as evidence to confirm religious issues.**

There is a great deal of evidence for this principle, including the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عز وجل says:** *{By which Allah guides those who pursue His pleasure to the ways of peace and brings them out from darknesses into the light, by His permission, and guides them to a straight path}* [al-Ma'idah 5:16].

b. **The verse in which Allah عز وجل says:** *{This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion}* [al-Ma'idah 5:3].

c. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good tidings for the Muslims}* [an-Nahl 16:89].

d. **It was narrated from Zayd ibn Arqam رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: «To proceed: O people, I am only human. Soon the envoy of my Lord will come to me and I will respond. I am leaving among you two weighty things: the first of them is the Book of Allah, in which is guidance and light. Follow the Book of Allah and hold fast to it».** [Narrated by Muslim].

Benefit

This principle implies the following: affirming what Allah and His Messenger صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ affirmed in the Quran and sahih Sunnah; negating what Allah and His Messenger صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ negated in the Quran and sahih Sunnah; and keeping quiet about that concerning which Allah and His Messenger صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ kept quiet, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned}* [al-Isra 17:36].

Benefit

This principle also implies that there should be no contradiction between these texts and what reason may understand from them that is contrary to the truth and is not correct. This is in contrast to the people of innovation and misguidance who place greater emphasis on reason than it deserves, as they give it precedence over the religious texts. This is unacceptable exaggeration, because no matter how great the esteem in which reason is held, it has its limits which should not be transgressed under any circumstances, especially with regard to matters of the unseen that reason cannot see and knows nothing about it, because it is far removed from the tangible realm in which reason operates.

Benefit

The basic principle according to Ahl as-Sunnah is that it is impossible for there to be a contradiction between a sound religious text and sound reasoning, for the One Who created this reasoning, namely Allah, the All-Aware, is also the One Who sent down this revelation to the heart of His Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. If there is anything that is thought to be a contradiction, then it is either because the religious text is not sound, or because the reasoning is flawed and is not sound, and has been contaminated with whims and desires and is following the path of falsehood and misguidance – Allah forbid.

The texts of the Quran and sahih Sunnah are to be understood in accordance with the understanding of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. This is in contrast with the people of innovation and misguidance, who have different views concerning this understanding and concerning the Sahabah themselves. Hence you see some of the innovators, such as the Kharijites and Rafidis for example, impugning the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, which is why they do not pay attention to their understanding of the religious texts.

The evidence for that is seen in a number of texts, including the following:

4

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says:** *{And whoever opposes the Messenger after guidance has become clear to him and follows other than the way of the believers – We will give him what he has taken and drive him into Hell, and evil it is as a destination}* [an-Nisa 4:115].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says:** *{So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been [rightly] guided; but if they turn away, they are only in dissension, and Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing}* [al-Baqarah 2:137].

c. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says:** *{And when it is said to them, "Believe as the people have believed," they say, "Should we believe as the foolish have believed?" Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish, but they know [it] not}* [al-Baqarah 2:13].

d. **The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said – as was narrated from him by al-Irbad ibn Sariyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ : «I urge you to adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the right-thinking, rightfully-guided caliphs who come after me. Hold fast to it, and cling tight to it».** Narrated above.

Benefit

The bidah of reinterpreting the texts:

One of the ideas that are contrary to this principle – that is, understanding the texts of the Quran and Sunnah as the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم understood them – is a dangerous idea that has appeared in modern times, namely that which is called reinterpreting the texts. What this idea means, according to its proponents, is that nowadays we have no need of the understanding of the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم, because their understanding was for a particular time that has passed and ended, and we must now understand the religious texts in a different way that is more appropriate to modern life, the life of progress and civilization!

The proponents of this idea are called by different names, such as: progressives, modernists or liberalists.

Undoubtedly this idea is contrary to the principles of Ahl as-Sunnah with regard to aqeedah, in many ways:

a. It is a reprehensible innovation that was not known to the Muslims of the first three generations, whom the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم testified were the best generations, as he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, according to the report narrated from him by Imran ibn Husayn رضي الله عنه: **«The best of you are my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them».** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

b. It contradicts what is indicated by the Quran and sahih Sunnah, that it is obligatory to limit ourselves to the Sahabah's understanding of the religious texts, and to beware of anything that is contrary to this understanding, namely reprehensible innovations and misguidance.

c. It comes under the heading of distorting the meanings, because reinterpreting the text means that each reader will have his own understanding of it, according to the meaning he prefers to understand from it, without any guideline or framework to regulate this understanding. Thus a single text may have many meanings that are contrary to the correct meaning. This is a distortion of the meaning itself, and that is precisely what the Children of Israel fell into, as Allah عز وجل tells us about them: *{So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They distort words from their [proper] usages}* [al-Ma'idah 5:13].

d. It opens the door to evil and mischief, as the religious texts become playthings in the hands of those who tamper with them, and they understand from them whatever coincides with their whims and desires, and their moods. Thus the truth and guidance that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ intended to convey through these texts will be lost. This is diametrically opposed to what Allah in His great wisdom intended of guiding people and bringing them forth from the depths of darkness to the light, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says concerning His holy Book: *{By which Allah guides those who pursue His pleasure to the ways of peace and brings them out from darknesses into the light, by His permission, and guides them to a straight path}* [al-Ma'idah 5:16].

Another principle of Ahl as-Sunnah with regard to verifying issues of aqeedah is to refer to the language of the Arabs in order to understand the intended meanings of the texts of the Quran and sahih Sunnah, if we cannot find one text that explains another, because the Quran was revealed in a clear Arabic language, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand}* [Yusuf 12:2] and *{And thus We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an and have diversified therein the warnings that perhaps they will avoid [sin] or it would cause them remembrance}* [Ta-Ha 20:113].

5

Activities

Put a (✓) in front of the correct statements and a (✗) next to the incorrect statements:

1. Aqeedah is the issues that are proven and definitive, that one may have doubts about. ( )
2. Wrong or corrupt aqeedah is that which is contrary to sound evidence from the Quran and sahih Sunnah. ( )
3. The spread of evil, corruption, turmoil and killing in the Muslim world in general, and in the Arab world in particular, is the result of people adhering to sound aqeedah. ( )
4. Sound aqeedah gives answers to the greatest questions posed by humanity: Where did I come from? Why was I created? Where will I go after death? ( )
5. It is not valid to learn aqeedah from the Prophet's Sunnah, because it is not a credible source. ( )
6. The characteristics of the people of innovation include faith, submission and veneration of the texts of Revelation. ( )
7. The Sufis regard the words and dreams of their shaykhs as a source of Islamic teachings and as evidence for religious matters. ( )
8. The idea that calls for the reinterpretation of religious texts is a great idea that is in accordance with the principles of Ahl as-Sunnah regarding aqeedah. ( )
9. The Shaytan is the main cause of people drifting away from sound aqeedah. ( )
10. One of the things that are praiseworthy according to the Quran and sahih Sunnah is exaggerating about the righteous. ( )

2

Drifting away from sound aqeedah

In this unit we will study

The causes of drifting away from sound aqeedah

Means of protecting oneself against drifting away from sound aqeedah

The causes of drifting away from sound aqeedah and means of protecting oneself against drifting away from sound aqeedah

Firstly: causes of drifting away from sound aqeedah

1 Ignorance of sound aqeedah

Because of turning away from learning and teaching it, or lack of interest in it and care for it, to the extent that a generation has grown up which does not know aqeedah and does not know what is contrary to it. Thus they believe that truth is falsehood and falsehood is truth, as Umar ibn al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: "The knots of Islam will be undone one after another when a new generation grows up in Islam who do not know what Jahiliyyah is".

2 Following the promoters of evil and leaders of misguidance. The evidence for that is as follows:

a. The verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And We made them leaders inviting to the Fire, and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped}* [al-Qasas 28:41].

b. It was narrated that Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«There will be callers at the gates of hell; whoever responds to them, they will throw him into it»**. I said: O Messenger of Allah, describe them to us. He said: **«They will be people from among us who speak as we speak»**. Narrated by Muslim.

c. It was narrated that Thawban رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«The only thing I fear for my ummah is leaders who will lead them astray»**. Narrated by Ahmad and by at-Timidhi, who classed it as sahih.

d. It was narrated that Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: I heard the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say: **«Allah will not take away knowledge by snatching it away from the people; rather He will take away knowledge by taking away the scholars until, when there is no scholar left, people will turn to ignorant leaders who will be asked questions and will issue fatwas without knowledge. They will go astray and lead others astray»**. Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Benefit

Promoters of evil:

There have always been promoters of evil and leaders of misguidance who bar people from the straight path of Allah and from the right religion, in the past and at present.

One of these people was as-Samiri.

As-Samiri was a man from a people who worshipped cows, who were neighbours of the Children of Israel. It was said that some of them lived at the time of Allah's Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. When Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ went to meet his Lord on Jabal Tur, as-Samiri made for the Children of Israel a calf of gold, and claimed that it was their god and the god of Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. A sound came out of it like the sound made by cows, which is called lowing or mooing; that happened when the wind blew through it. When the Children of Israel heard it, they danced around it and rejoiced.

He is the one who misled the people of Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ away from the worship of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and he made fair-seeming to them the worship of the calf instead of Allah جَلَّ وَعَلَا, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us about him: *{[Allah] said, "But indeed, We have tried your people after you [departed], and the Samiri has led them astray"}* [Ta-Ha 20:85].

Another of the promoters of evil was Amr ibn Aamir al-Khuza'i:

It was narrated that Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«I saw Hell, parts of it consuming other parts, and I saw Amr dragging his intestines, for he was the first one to introduce the custom of the sa'ibah».**

Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

What is meant by the custom of the sa'ibah is a system whereby they left a she-camel to go wherever she wanted, and she would not be ridden or be barred from water sources or grazing land, in fulfilment of a vow that they made to their gods.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saw him dragging his intestines in Hell because he was the first one to change the religion of Ismail as he set up idols and he introduced the custom of the sa'ibah.

For Your Information

In modern times: the extreme Rafidis:

They went against the principles of Ahl as-Sunnah in many matters [1], including the following:

Rejecting the sahih Prophetic hadiths which they reject on the basis of whims and desires, and moods, not on the basis of the rules of hadith that are followed by the leading scholars of hadith. That includes their rejection of the sahih hadiths in which the Prophet ﷺ explained some matters of the unseen, such as the portents and signs of the Hour, which will come to pass at the end of time, including the Dajjal, the descent of Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and the Mahdi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

The Mahdi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is Muhammad ibn Abdillah al-Alawi al-Fatimi al-Hasani رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Allah will reform him in a night, meaning that He will forgive his sins, support him, grant him understanding and guide him after he was not like that. He will support him with people from the East who will help him to establish his dominion. He is the one who is praised and it is promised that he will emerge at the end of time. Allegiance will be sworn to him at the Sacred House and he will become the caliph of the Muslims.

Benefit

What is meant here is not the Mahdi who the Rafidis claim exists at present, and they are awaiting his emergence from the tunnel of Samurra, because that is a kind of nonsense and extreme confusion caused by the Shaytan; there is no evidence for it in the Quran and Sunnah, and no rational proof for it.

Their impugning the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, especially the great Sahabi Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, of whom they say that "He was the beginning of our calamity"!

Exaggeration about the role of reason and elevating it above its appropriate status, so that it becomes a judge of the texts of the Quran and sahih Sunnah, and is given precedence over them.

(1) There will be a more detailed discussion of this topic elsewhere.

For Your Information

Another cause of deviation from sound aqeedah:

3 Following whims and desires

This refers to following what people like and desire, which may be beneficial or may be harmful. What is meant is that which is harmful and takes people away from the truth.

The evidence for that:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded}* [al-Jathiyah 45:23].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{But if they do not respond to you - then know that they only follow their [own] desires. And who is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allah? Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people}* [al-Qasas 28:50].

Benefit

4 Exaggeration about the righteous

This refers to praising them to excess and raising them above their status by devoting some kinds of worship to them, by showing devotion to their tombs, offering sacrifices, making vows, leaving offerings, calling upon their occupants, and seeking their help and support, as the people of Nuh did with their righteous men, when they said: *{And said, 'Never leave your gods and never leave Wadd or Suwa' or Yaghuth and Ya'uq and Nasr'}* [Nuh 71:23]. This also happens with the grave worshippers nowadays in many regions.

Evidence that this is prohibited includes the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth}* [an-Nisa 4:171].

b. **The words of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «O people, beware of going to extremes in religion, for those who came before you were destroyed by going to extremes in religion».** Narrated by Ahmad and an-Nasai; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

5 Blind following

This refers to following parents, scholars, leaders and prominent figures and blindly obeying them without any evidence or proof. There is a great deal of evidence concerning that, including the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Rather, they say, "Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are in their footsteps [rightly] guided"}* [az-Zukhruf 43:22].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And they will say, "Our Lord, indeed we obeyed our masters and our dignitaries, and they led us astray from the [right] way"}* [al-Ahzab 33:67].

c. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{They have taken their scholars and monks as lords besides Allah , and [also] the Messiah, the son of Mary}* [at-Tawbah 9:31].

What is meant is that they followed them in regarding as permissible that which Allah has prohibited and regarding as prohibited that which Allah has permitted, with no proof or evidence.

Blind following in the modern era:

In the modern era, we find two prominent examples of this blind following and blind obedience:

The Sufis **The Rafidis**

These two groups have fallen into blind following of shaykhs of misguidance and leaders of evil, with no understanding or proof.
They believe that obedience to them should be absolute and blind. So one of them with his shaykhs is like a dead body in the hands of the one who is washing it, and he turns him whichever way he wishes.

Causes of deviation from sound aqeedah also include:

6 Following paths of misguidance.

The evidence for that includes

The evidence for that includes the verse in which Allah says: *{And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way}* [al-An'am 6:153].

7 Failing to pay attention to and reflect upon the verses of the Quran and Allah's signs in the universe.

The evidence for that includes the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Those are the ones over whose hearts and hearing and vision Allah has sealed, and it is those who are the heedless}* [an-Nahl 16:108].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless}* [al-A'raf 7:179].

c **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And how many a sign within the heavens and earth do they pass over while they, therefrom, are turning away}* [Yusuf 12:105].

8 Arrogance

This is what prompts a person to reject the truth and not to accept it from the one who brought it, because he looks down on him, as the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Arrogance is rejecting the truth and scorning people».** Narrated by Muslim.

«Rejecting the truth» means being too arrogant to accept it.

«Scorning people» means looking down on them.

Arrogance has a devastating impact, for it is that which caused the head, source and foundation of evil – namely Iblees – to turn away from the clear truth, as Allah جَلَّ وَعَلَا tells us: *{And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers}* [al-Baqarah 2:34].

It was also the main factor that led disbelieving nations to turn away from following the straight path to which the messengers of Allah عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ called people, as Allah جَلَّ وَعَلَا tells us, explaining this fact: *{Then We sent after them Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his establishment with Our signs, but they behaved arrogantly and were a criminal people}* [Yunus 10:75] and *{As for 'Aad, they were arrogant upon the earth without right and said, "Who is greater than us in strength?"}* [Fussilat 41:15].

There is a great deal of evidence for that from the Quran and sahih Sunnah, including the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{[Iblees] said, "My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all"}* [al-Hijr 15:39].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze}* [Fatir 35:6].

c. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{[Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful [to You]"}* [al-A'raf 7:16-17].

d. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And Satan will say when the matter has been concluded, "Indeed, Allah had promised you the promise of truth. And I promised you, but I betrayed you. But I had no authority over you except that I invited you, and you responded to me"}* [Ibrahim 14:22].

e. **It was narrated from Iyad ibn Himar al-Mujashi'i رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said one day in his khutbah: «Indeed my Lord has commanded me to teach you what you do not know of what He has taught me this day. 'Every type of wealth that I have granted to a person is halal. I have created My slaves with an inclination towards the truth (hunafa), all of them, but the devils come to them and drive them away from their religion, forbidding them that which I have permitted to them and instructing them to associate with Me that for which I have not sent down any authority».** Narrated above.

f. **It was narrated that Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ drew a line with his hand, then he said: «This is the straight path of Allah». Then he drew lines to the right and left of it, then he said: «These are [other] paths; there is no path among them but there is a devil on it, calling people to it». Then he recited the words:** *{And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways}* [al-An'am 6:153]. Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Arna'ut.

Causes of deviation from sound aqeedah

1. Being unaware of what sound aqeedah is
2. Following the promoters of evil
3. Following whims and desires
4. Exaggerating about the righteous
5. Blind following
6. Following paths of misguidance
7. Heedlessness
8. Arrogance
9. Following the Shaytan

Secondly: Means of protecting oneself against deviating from sound aqeedah:

1 Following the straight path which is based on the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, that is, the way of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم, and avoiding that which is opposed to it, namely the paths of innovation and misguidance. There is a great deal of evidence for that, including the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عز وجل says:** *{And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way}* [al-An'am 6:153].

b. **The verse in which Allah عز وجل says:** *{Follow, [O mankind], what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies. Little do you remember}* [al-A'raf 7:3].

e. **The words of the Prophet ﷺ: «Those among you who live long enough will see great differences. Beware of newly-introduced matters, for they are misguidance. Whoever among you lives to see that should adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the rightly-guided, right-thinking caliphs; adhere firmly to it».** Quoted above.

2 Being cautious of promoters of evil and leaders of misguidance, and keeping far away from them. The evidence for that is as follows:

a. **The words of Aisha رضي الله عنها who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited this verse:** *{It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah . But those firm in knowledge say, "We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord." And no one will be reminded except those of understanding}* [Aal Imran 3:7]. **She said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: «So if you see those who seek out that which is unspecific (ambiguous) in it, they are the ones to whom Allah referred when He said: Beware of them».** Agreed upon.

b. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: «At the end of time, there will be charlatans and liars who will tell you of things of which you and your forefathers never heard. Beware of them and keep your distance from them, lest they mislead you and confuse you». Narrated by Muslim.

c. In the hadith of the Dajjal, who is one of the worst promoters of evil and strongest leaders of misguidance, there is proof for this important principle, which is keeping away from leaders of evil and misguidance. It was narrated that Imran ibn Husayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: «Whoever hears about the Dajjal, let him keep away from him, for by Allah a man may come to him thinking that he is a believer, then he will end up following him because of what he will present to him of specious arguments, or because of what he will have of specious arguments». Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

What is meant by keeping away from him is avoiding him and not coming anywhere near him.

3 Seeking knowledge and understanding of Islam from trustworthy, well-versed scholars who follow Prophetic methodology. The evidence for that is as follows:

a. The verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah}* [Muhammad 47:19].

b. The verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{So ask the people of the message if you do not know. [We sent them] with clear proofs and written ordinances}* [an-Nahl 16:43-44]. *{with clear proofs and written ordinances}* means: with proof and evidence.

c. In a report narrated by Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the Prophet ﷺ said: «When Allah wills good for a person, He grants him understanding of religion». Agreed upon.

4 Refraining from going to extremes in religion, and being cautious to avoid that. The evidence for that is as follows:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth}* [an-Nisa 4:171].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Say, "O People of the Scripture, do not exceed limits in your religion beyond the truth}* [al-Ma'idah 5:77].

c. **The words of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : «O people, beware of going to extremes in religion, for those who came before you were destroyed by going to extremes in religion ».** Quoted above.

5 Complying with the command of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ by regarding the Shaytan as an enemy. That is done by striving to attain true servitude to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, seeking refuge with Him, putting one's trust in Him, and showing sincere devotion to Him by doing what He commands and avoiding what He forbids.
There are many texts which speak of that, including the following:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze}* [Fatir 35:6].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Indeed, My servants - no authority will you have over them, except those who follow you of the deviator}* [al-Hijr 15:42].

c. **The words of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ concerning the accursed Shaytan:** *{Indeed, there is for him no authority over those who have believed and rely upon their Lord}* [an-Nahl 16:99].

d. **The words of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, speaking of Iblees:** *{[Iblees] said, "By your might, I will surely mislead them all Except, among them, Your chosen servants"}* [Saad 38:82-83].

e. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And if there comes to you from Satan an evil suggestion, then seek refuge in Allah . Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing}* [Fussilat 41:36].

f. **The words of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «The Shaytan comes to one of you and says: Who created such and such? Who created such and such? Until he says: Who created your Lord? If he goes that far, let him seek refuge with Allah and stop these thoughts ».** Agreed upon.

6 Not following whims and desires or speculation; not blindly following parents, scholars, leaders and prominent figures, and being extremely cautious about that; relying on evidence and proof. The evidence for that is as follows:

a. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Then We put you, [O Muhammad], on an ordained way concerning the matter [of religion]; so follow it and do not follow the inclinations of those who do not know}* [al-Jathiyah 45:18].

b. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{[We said], "O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah." Indeed, those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment for having forgotten the Day of Account}* [Saad 38:26].

c. **The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{And most of them follow not except assumption. Indeed, assumption avails not against the truth at all. Indeed, Allah is Knowing of what they do}* [Yunus 10:36].

d. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And they have thereof no knowledge. They follow not except assumption, and indeed, assumption avails not against the truth at all}* [an-Najm 53:28].

e. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So is he who is on clear evidence from his Lord like him to whom the evil of his work has been made attractive and they follow their [own] desires}* [Muhammad 47:14].

f. The words of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : **«Beware of conjecture, for conjecture is the falsest of speech ».** Agreed upon.

Activities

1 Briefly explain the following:

Causes of drifting away from sound aqeedah.

a. Sources of sound aqeedah.

b. Means of protecting oneself against drifting away from sound aqeedah.

2 Based on your own reading, write briefly about the following:

- Going to extremes in religion.
- Innovation (bidah) and the danger it poses to the religion, the individual and society.
- Blind following.

3

Tawhid

In this unit we will study

1. Definition and importance of Tawhid
2. Impact of Tawhid on the individual
3. Explanation that Tawhid is Islam, and it is the religion of all the messengers

Definition and importance of Tawhid

Definition of Tawhid

Tawhid in linguistic terms:
The word Tawhid comes from the root wahhada, which means to make something one.

In Islamic terminology:
Tawhid means to attribute to Allah that which is uniquely His of divinity, Lordship and the sublime names and attributes.

Thus both in linguistic terms and in Islamic terminology, Tawhid conveys the meaning of uniqueness; thus Tawhid means believing that Allah is unique with regard to those sublime characteristics that belong to Him Alone, and no one can have any share in them with Him, no matter how high that person's status is, whether he is an angel who is close to Allah, a prophet who was sent, or a righteous man.

It should be noted that belief in Tawhid cannot be sound unless three conditions are met: affirming it in the heart, uttering it on the tongue, and acting in accordance with it. Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab said in his book Kashf ash-Shubuhat: "There is no difference of scholarly opinion that belief in Tawhid must be affirmed in the heart, on the tongue and in one's physical actions. If any of these three is lacking, then that person cannot be a Muslim".

The word Tawhid and its derivatives appear in the texts of the Quran and Sunnah:

The followers of innovation claim that the word Tawhid has no basis in the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. This is a false claim; in fact the texts of the Quran and Sunnah are filled with this word.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And when you mention your Lord Alone [wahdahu] in the Qur'an, they turn back in aversion}* [al-Isra 17:46].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{They will be told], "That is because, when Allah was called upon Alone [wahdahu], you disbelieved; but if others were associated with Him, you believed"}* [Ghafir 40:12].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and there has appeared between us and you animosity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah Alone [wahdahu]}* [al-Mumtahinah 60:4].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And your god is one God [ilaahun waahid]}* [al-Baqarah 2:163]. And there are many similar verses.

From the Sunnah:

- Muslim narrated the hadith about the Farewell Pilgrimage from Jabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, in which it says: **«Until, when he was in al-Bayda, he raised his voice proclaiming the word of Tawhid».**
- In as-Sahihayn, it is narrated that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to Muadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, when he sent him to Yemen: **«Let the first thing to which you call them be that they should affirm the oneness (yuwahhidu) of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ».** This is the wording of al-Bukhari.
- And the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Whoever affirms the oneness of Allah and disbelieves in that which is worshipped besides Him, his wealth and his life are protected, and his reckoning will be with Allah».** Narrated by Muslim.
- And he صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Islam is built on five [pillars]: affirming the oneness of Allah (Tawhid) and establishing the prayer...».** This hadith was narrated by the two shaykhs [al-Bukhari and Muslim]; this version was narrated by Muslim.

For Your Information

The importance of Tawhid and its impact on the individual

Ibn Abi'l-Izz al-Hanafi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: You should understand that Tawhid (affirming the oneness of Allah) is the first thing to which the messengers called people, and it is the first step that one should take, the first stage of one's journey towards Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid Taghut"}* [an-Nahl 16:36]. Hence the first duty that is required of the accountable person is to testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah. Thus affirming the oneness of Allah is the first thing that one does to enter Islam, and it is the last thing that one should do when departing this world, as the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«The one whose last words are Laa ilaaha illa Allah will enter Paradise».** End quote.

The immense importance of Tawhid is seen from the following:

1. **It is the purpose of creation, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said:** *{And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me}* [adh-Dhariyat 51:56]**; that is, to affirm My oneness**

2. It is the call of all of the messengers عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلسَّلَامُ, and the first thing to which they called people, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We sent not before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, "There is no deity except Me, so worship Me"}* [al-Anbiya 21:25].

3. Deeds are not accepted without it. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allah , your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers. Rather, worship [only] Allah and be among the grateful}* [az-Zumar 39:65-66].

It is the first duty that the accountable person should learn, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah}* [Muhammad 47:19].

It is the last word that a person should utter before he departs this life. It was narrated that Muadh ibn Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: «The one whose last words are Laa ilaaha illa Allah will enter Paradise». Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

4

5

It is Allah's right over His slaves. It was narrated that Muadh ibn Jabal said: Whilst I was riding behind the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, with nothing between me and him except the back of the saddle, he said: **«O Muadh ibn Jabal!»** I said: Here I am at your service, O Messenger of Allah. Then he rode on for a while, then he said: **«O Muadh»** I said: Here I am at your service, O Messenger of Allah. Then he rode on for a while, then he said: **«O Muadh»** I said: Here I am at your service, O Messenger of Allah. He said: **«Do you know what Allah's right over His slaves is?»** I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: **«Allah's right over His slaves is that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him».** Agreed upon.

6

It is the means of the Muslim ummah gaining power and security in the land. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after that - then those are the defiantly disobedient}* [an-Nur 24:55].

7

It is the means of attaining security in this world and the Hereafter. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice - those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided}* [al-An'am 6:82].

8

It is a means of attaining forgiveness of sins, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills}* [an-Nisa 4:116]. Associating others with Allah (shirk) is an impediment to forgiveness of sins.

Benefit

The hadith of the slip of paper:

At-Tirmidhi narrated, and classed the report as hasan, from Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا from the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that he said: **«Allah will bring forth a man of my ummah before all creatures and will spread out ninety-nine scrolls [containing the record of his bad deeds] for him, each scroll extending as far as the eye can see. Then He will say, 'Do you deny anything in this? Have my scribes who keep note wronged you?' He will say, 'No, my Lord.' He will ask him, 'Do you have any excuse?' He will say, 'No, my Lord.' Allah will say, 'Rather you have with Us a good deed, and you will not be wronged this Day.' A slip of paper will then be brought out, on which are the words 'Ashhadu an laa ilaaha illa Allah wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu (I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger).' Allah will say, 'Bring your balance.' The man will say, 'O Lord, what is this slip of paper in comparison to these scrolls?' And He will reply, 'You will not be wronged.' The scrolls will then be put in one side of the Balance and the slip of paper in the other, and the scrolls will become light and the slip of paper heavy, for nothing could compare in weight to the name of Allah.»**

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said, commenting on the hadith of the slip of paper: "That is because of what accompanies this word of honesty, sincerity, purity of heart and good intentions, for words and acts of worship – even though they may appear outwardly to be the same – vary greatly depending on what people have in their hearts of sincerity and devotion."

9

Tawhid is the way and religion of our father Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ, which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ commanded His Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to follow, as He said: *{Then We revealed to you, [O Muhammad], to follow the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth; and he was not of those who associate with Allah}* [an-Nahl 16:123].

It is also the supplication of Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, as Allah tells us about him: *{And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham said, "My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols"}* [Ibrahim 14:35].

10

It is the noblest of all deeds. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was asked: Which deed is best? He said: «Believing in Allah and His Messenger». Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

11

It is the condition of admittance to Paradise, as Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer – those will enter Paradise, being given provision therein without account}* [Ghafir 40:40].

Anyone who does that which is contrary to it, such as associating others with Allah and so on, Paradise will be prohibited to him, and his abode will be the Fire, as Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, he who associates others with Allah – Allah has forbidden him Paradise, and his refuge is the Fire. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers}* [al-Ma'idah 5:72].

The impact of Tawhid on the individual

1

Well-being and a good life in this world and the Hereafter. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do}* [an-Nahl 16:97].

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "Sincerity and Tawhid are like a tree in the heart, the branches of which are righteous deeds and its fruits are a good life in this world and eternal bliss in the Hereafter… Shirk, lying and showing off are like a tree in the heart, the fruits of which in this world are fear, worry, distress, anxiety and darkness in the heart, and its fruits in the Hereafter are zaqqum and eternal punishment". End quote.

2

Relief of distress in this world and the Hereafter.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "Tawhid is what people turn to whether they are enemies or close friends of Allah. As for His enemies, He saves them from distress and hardship in this world: *{And when they board a ship, they supplicate Allah, sincere to Him in religion. But when He delivers them to the land, at once they associate others with Him}* [al-Ankabut 29:65]. As for His close friends, He will save them from distress and hardship in this world and the Hereafter. There is no means of warding off the hardship and calamities of this world like Tawhid. Therefore supplication at the time of distress must include words of Tawhid. The supplication of Dhu'n-Noon is a supplication with which no one calls upon Allah at times of distress but He will grant him relief by virtue of the word of Tawhid mentioned in it. Nothing brings about great hardship except shirk, and nothing can save one from it except Tawhid; hence Tawhid is what people turn to at times of distress, for it is their refuge, fortress and source of help. End quote.

3

Steadfastness in the grave, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in worldly life and in the Hereafter}* [Ibrahim 14:27].

It was narrated from al-Bara ibn Azib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«When the Muslim is questioned in the grave, he will testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. That is referred to in the verse:** *{Allah keeps firm those who believe, with the firm word, in worldly life and in the Hereafter}* [Ibrahim 14:27].**»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

4

Salvation from eternity in Hell. It is narrated in mutawatir hadiths from the Prophet ﷺ that the monotheists (those who affirm the oneness of Allah) will be brought forth from the Fire. Shaykh al-Islam said: "Moreover, there are mutawatir hadiths from the Prophet ﷺ which state that Allah will bring forth some people from the Fire after they have entered it, and that the Prophet ﷺ will intercede for some people who entered the Fire". End quote.

5

Being safe from fear and terror in this world and the Hereafter; these are things that happen to the disbeliever because of his shirk. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve for what they have associated with Allah of which He had not sent down [any] authority}* [Aal Imran 3:151].

Similarly, in the Hereafter, our Lord tells us that those who affirm His oneness will attain perfect safety on the Day of Resurrection because of their Tawhid. Our Lord says: *{Indeed, those for whom the best [reward] has preceded from Us – they are from it far removed. They will not hear its sound, while they are in that which their souls desire, abiding eternally. They will not be grieved by the greatest terror, and the angels will meet them, [saying], "This is your Day which you have been promised"}* [al-Anbiya 21:101-103].

The blessing of Tawhid:

A Muslim student was studying in an Indian university with one of the top professors. After the lecture ended, the student went up to the teacher to ask some questions about things that he had not understood. He was shocked to notice a foul odour emanating from the professor! The student said: "What is this, Professor?" He said to him: "This is the fragrance of the urine of our god" – meaning the cow!

For Your Information

Explaining that Tawhid is Islam, and it is the religion of all of the messengers

Benefit

The religion with which Allah sent His messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, and with which He sent down His Books, is **Islam**.

This means affirming the oneness of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ by worshipping Him and submitting completely to Him.

It is the religion of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in heaven and on earth, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

{Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is **Islam***}* [Aal Imran 3:19] and *{And whoever desires other than* **Islam** *as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers}* [Aal Imran 3:85].

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says, telling us about what Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said when he addressed his people: *{And if you turn away [from my advice] then no payment have I asked of you. My reward is only from Allah , and I have been commanded to be of the* **Muslims***}* [Yunus 10:72].

Similarly, Allah tells us of the instructions of Ibrahim and Yaqub عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ[to their sons], that the religion is Islam, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And who would be averse to the religion of Abraham except one who makes a fool of himself. And We had chosen him in this world, and indeed he, in the Hereafter, will be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him, "Submit", he said "I have submitted* **[in Islam]** *to the Lord of the worlds." And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Jacob, [saying], "O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are* **Muslims***"}* [al-Baqarah 2:130-132].

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says of His Close Friend Ibrahim عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ : *{Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a* **Muslim** *[submitting to Allah]. And he was not of the polytheists}* [Aal Imran 3:67].

And Allah's Prophet Yusuf عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ said: *{Cause me to die a* **Muslim** *and join me with the righteous}* [Yusuf 12:101].

Allah's Prophet Sulaiman عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ said: *{O assembly [of jinn], which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in* **submission***?}* [an-Naml 27:38].

Balqees, the Queen of Saba (Sheba) said: *{My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, and* **I submit** *with Solomon to Allah , Lord of the worlds}* [an-Naml 27:44].

Allah's Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ addressed his people very clearly, as Allah tells us: *{And Moses said, "O my people, if you have believed in Allah, then rely upon Him, if you should be* **Muslims***"}* [Yunus 10:84].

The magicians of Pharaoh said: *{And you do not resent us except because we believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us. Our Lord, pour upon us patience and let us die as* **Muslims [in submission to You]***}* [al-A'raf 7:126].

This is what the worst of the disbelievers, Pharaoh, the enemy of Allah, said: *{I believe that there is no deity except that in whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of the* **Muslims***}* [Yunus 10:90].

Allah tells us in His Noble Book about the followers of Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: *{The disciples said, "We are supporters for Allah. We have believed in Allah and testify that we are* **Muslims [submitting to Him]***"}* [Aal Imran 3:52].

Allah says of the earlier prophets: *{Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted [to Allah]* **judged by it***}* [al-Ma'idah 5:44].

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says – in the context of explaining Islam and addressing the People of the Book, emphasizing that Islam is the religion of all the messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ: *{Say, "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are* **Muslims [in submission] to Him***"}* [al-Baqarah 2:136].

This is Islam in a general sense.

The religion of the prophets is one and the same; they all brought the message of Tawhid.

As for laws, they varied, as the laws of each of them differed from one another with regard to what is lawful and what is prohibited. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{To each of you We prescribed a law and a method}* [al-Ma'idah 5:48]. The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, explaining this truth: **«The Prophets are like brothers born to co-wives; their mothers are different but their religion is one».** Agreed upon.

What is meant is that the basic foundation of their religion is one, namely Tawhid, even though the details of their laws differed.

There is no connection between the fact that laws may change and be abrogated and the fact that the original religion calls to Tawhid and submission to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, which is the pure religion of Islam. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims}* [al-Baqarah 2:132].

Benefit

The "three heavenly religions"

Regarding the phrase "the three heavenly religions":

This phrase is wrong. It is used by many ordinary Muslims, and gives the impression that there are [valid] religions other than Islam. What they are referring to is Judaism and Christianity. But there is no true religion except Islam. Yes, there are different laws, but the religion is one. Allah did not give them these names; rather they called themselves that. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{They say, "Be Jews or Christians [so] you will be guided"}* [al-Baqarah 2:135].

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says, telling us of what they said about themselves: *{And from those who say, 'We are Christians' We took their covenant}* [al-Ma'idah 5:14].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{those who say, "We are Christians"}* [al-Ma'idah 5:82].

Activities

1. What does Tawhid mean in linguistic terms and in Islamic terminology? How would you respond to one who says that the word Tawhid is an innovated word (bidah)? Give evidence for what you say.

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2. Explain briefly the importance of Tawhid. Why is it the first thing to which the prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ called people?

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3. What is the positive impact of Tawhid on individuals and societies? Base your answer on your own reading.

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4. Discuss this phrase objectively, quoting relevant religious texts: "the three heavenly religions".

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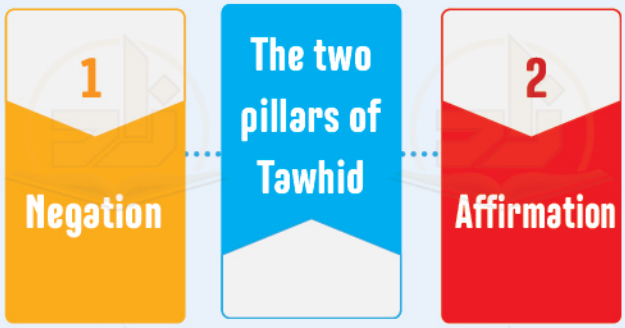
4

The pillars of Tawhid

In this unit we will study

1. The pillars of Tawhid
2. The categories of Tawhid
3. How the disbelievers and polytheists affirm Tawhid ar-Rububiyah (oneness of divine Lordship)
4. Impacts of belief in Tawhid ar-Rububiyah (oneness of divine Lordship)
5. Evidence for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ other than the religious texts

The pillars of Tawhid



Tawhid has two pillars, without which it cannot be established.

The first is negation. The second is affirmation.

The texts of the Quran and Sunnah that discuss the matter of Tawhid are based on these two concepts.

Ash-Shinqeeti said: "To understand the meaning of Laa ilaaha illa Allah, we may note that this phrase consists of negation and affirmation.

What is meant by negation here is abandoning all that is worshipped other than Allah, no matter who or what it is, with regard to all types of worship, no matter what they are.

What is meant by affirmation here is devoting all types of worship to Allah جَلَّ وَعَلَا Alone, with sincerity, in the manner that He has prescribed on the lips of His Messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ." End quote.

Based on that, whoever affirms only that Allah is deserving of worship, without believing in definitive terms that turning to anything other than Him in worship is false, has not yet believed in the word of Tawhid, by virtue of which he will be able to attain salvation on the Day of Resurrection.

Similarly, whoever denies divinity (the idea that there is one to be worshipped) altogether, this is negation and nothing more. He has not believed in Tawhid, for it is necessary that there be negation and affirmation.

Anyone who knows Arabic will realize that the style used in the word of Tawhid, **Laa ilaaha illa Allah**, is what includes both negation and affirmation, and requires both of them together.

Moreover, there are religious texts which refer to the same meaning. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid Taghut"}* [an-Nahl 16:36].

The affirmation is seen in the words: {Worship Allah}.

The negation is seen in the words: {and avoid Taghut}.

This is similar to the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him}* [an-Nisa 4:36]. This is a command to worship Allah and a prohibition on devoting worship to any other than Him. Thus it combines the negation and the affirmation.

In the verse *{That you not worship except Allah}* [Hud 11:26], there is a prohibition on worshipping anything other than Allah, and a command to worship Him Alone, with no partner or associate.

In the words of Ibrahim, *{Indeed, I am disassociated from that which you worship, Except for He who created me}* [az-Zukhruf 43:26-27], We see a negation and an affirmation. Ibrahim's words *{I am disassociated from that which you worship}* are a negation of worship in absolute terms, and his words *{Except for He who created me}* are an affirmation of worship only for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

So it is essential for the one who wants to truly believe in Tawhid to combine both of its pillars, which are negation and affirmation.

That is negation of all that is worshipped falsely, and affirmation of servitude to the One Who is deserving of that, namely Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, to the exclusion of all others.

Then you should understand that what is meant by negation is disbelief in taghut (false gods) and what is meant by affirmation is belief in Allah.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold}* [al-Baqarah 2:256].

The most trustworthy handhold is the word of Tawhid: Laa ilaaha illa Allah.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid Taghut"}* [an-Nahl 16:36].

So belief in Allah Alone is sound on condition that one reject and disbelieve in Taghut (false gods).

Benefit

Freedom of belief

Religious freedom or freedom of belief is a principle which calls for giving freedom in general, to individuals or groups of people, to practice their religion openly, or speak of their beliefs and practice their religious rituals, whether by teaching, following religious practices or celebrating religious festivals. This term also includes the freedom to change one's religion or not to follow any religion at all.

On the basis of what we have discussed of the two pillars of Tawhid, it becomes clear how dangerous the call for **freedom of belief is!**

That is because the laws governing **freedom of belief** do not recognize disbelief in Taghut; rather they approve of everything that is worshipped besides Allah!

This freedom gives people the right to worship whatever they want, at the same time as preventing others from objecting to that or refuting its falsehood. Undoubtedly this is contrary to belief in Tawhid, one of the most important aspects of which is worshipping Allah Alone, with no partner or associate, and disbelieving in and rejecting everything that is worshipped besides Allah. That is disbelief in Taghut, which is obligatory for the one who believes in the oneness of Allah, as he is required to declare openly his disavowal of disbelief (kufr) and its people. This is the clear truth.

Activities

1. **"The two pillars of Tawhid are negation and affirmation." Explain this phrase in clear detail, referring to books of aqeedah.**

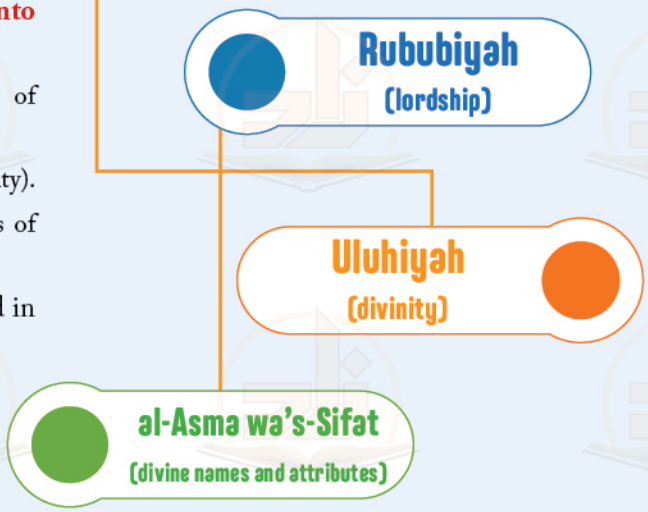
2. **What is the meaning of disbelieving in Taghut? Speak about that in the light of the idea of "freedom of belief", highlighting how much they have in common and how much they differ.**

Categories of Tawhid

The scholars have divided Tawhid into three categories:

1. Tawhid ar-rububiyah (Oneness of Lordship).
2. Tawhid al-uluhiyah (Oneness of divinity).
3. Tawhid al-asma wa's-sifat (Oneness of the sublime names and attributes).

These three categories are discussed in detail below:



1 Firstly: Tawhid ar-Rububiyah (Oneness of Lordship).

In linguistic terms, the word rububiyah comes from the root rababa, from which comes the word ar-rabb (the lord). When mentioned without qualification, the word ar-Rabb (the Lord) refers to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, for He is the Lord of all things, and to Him belongs lordship over all of creation, with no partner or associate.

In relation to anyone other than Allah, the word rabb only appears in the genitive construction (idafah). So it may be said that so-and-so is rabb hadha'sh-shay (lit. the lord of this thing), meaning that he is its owner. Or it may be said that he is rabb ad-dabbah (lord – i.e., owner or master – of the animal), or rabb ad-dar (the owner of the house), or rabb al-bayt (head of the household). One example of that is seen in the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And he said to the one whom he knew would go free, "Mention me before your master ['inda rabbika]"}* [Yusuf 12:42].

In Islamic terminology, rububiyah refers to believing in all the actions of Allah that are unique to Him and are connected to His slaves, namely: creation, sovereignty and control.

Many concepts stem from these, such as: provision, withholding, bestowing, giving life, causing death, resurrecting, giving benefit, relieving harm, and other concepts that are connected to the meaning of Allah being ar-Rabb.

Thus what is meant by rububiyah is that Allah is in charge of His slaves in the sense that He is taking care of them, ensuring their well-being and controlling their affairs. Shaykh al-Islam said: "Ar-Rabb is the one who cares for [yurabbi] His slave and controls his affairs".

Rububiyah is based on three things that are only to be affirmed for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

Firstly: Creation:

That is, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ Alone is the Creator, and no one has the ability to create except Allah. There is a great deal of evidence for that, including the following:

- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah , Lord of the worlds}* [al-A'raf 7:54].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{He is Allah , the Creator, the Inventor, the Fashioner}* [al-Hashr 59:24].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And those they invoke other than Allah create nothing, and they [themselves] are created}* [an-Nahl 16:20].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, those you invoke besides Allah will never create [as much as] a fly, even if they gathered together for that purpose}* [al-Hajj 22:73].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "Are there of your 'partners' any who begins creation and then repeats it?"}* [Yunus 10:34].

And there are many verses which speak of that.

What is meant by creation here is bringing something into existence from nothing. No one is able to do that except Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Some of the innovators among the philosophers and others claim that there are others who could create alongside Allah, and they quoted as evidence for that the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So blessed is Allah, the best of creators}* [al-Mu'minun 23:14]. According to them, Allah affirmed that there are other creators alongside Him.

The response to that is that creation when attributed to created beings refers to that which involves turning something into something else, such as turning clay into a jug, wood into a wheel, and so on.

It is also subject to the availability of the means and measures that Allah has provided.

In the case of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, He is able to create merely by saying, "Be!" and it is.

Secondly: Sovereignty (or dominion):

That is, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ Alone is sovereign. There is a great deal of evidence for that, including the following:

- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will"}* [Aal Imran 3:26].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Blessed is He in whose hand is dominion, and He is over all things competent}* [al-Mulk 67:1].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And say, "Praise to Allah , who has not taken a son and has had no partner in [His] dominion"}* [al-Isra 17:111].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So exalted is He in whose hand is the realm of all things, and to Him you will be returned}* [Ya-Seen 36:83], And there are many similar verses.

Thirdly: Control:

That is, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ Alone controls all things and directs the running of this universe. There is a great deal of evidence for that, including the following:

- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and made subject the sun and the moon, each running [its course] for a specified term. He arranges [each] matter; He details the signs that you may, of the meeting with your Lord, be certain}* [ar-Ra'd 13:2].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and then established Himself above the Throne, arranging the matter [of His creation]}* [Yunus 10:3].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Or who controls hearing and sight and who brings the living out of the dead and brings the dead out of the living and who arranges [every] matter?" They will say, "Allah," so say, "Then will you not fear Him?"}* [Yunus 10:31].
- The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{He arranges [each] matter from the heaven to the earth}* [as-Sajdah 32:5].

And there are many similar verses.

Other concepts that are connected to rububiyah, such as the giving of life and death, the granting of provision, resurrecting, causing harm and benefit , and so on.

Ar-Rabb (the Lord) is the one who initiates and repeats. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And it is He who begins creation; then He repeats it}* [ar-Rum 30:27].

Ar-Rabb is the one who gives life and causes death, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{There is no deity except Him; He gives life and causes death. [He is] your Lord and the Lord of your first forefathers}* [ad-Dukhan 44:8].

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed}* [al-Mulk 67:2].

Harm and benefit are in the hand of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And when We give the people a taste of mercy after adversity has touched them, at once they conspire against Our verses}* [Yunus 10:21].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "Then who could prevent Allah at all if He intended for you harm or intended for you benefit?"}* [al-Fath 48:11].

Provision is in the hand of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, those you worship besides Allah do not possess for you [the power of] provision. So seek from Allah provision and worship Him and be grateful to Him. To Him you will be returned}* [al-Ankabut 29:17].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah extends provision for whom He wills and restricts [it]}* [ar-Ra'd 13:26].

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is the bestower and withholder. He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Whatever Allah grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter}* [Fatir 35:2].

The Messenger صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«O Allah, none can withhold what You give, and none can give what You withhold».** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Other matters connected to Allah being ar-Rabb include the granting of victory, and the guiding of people's hearts. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And victory is not except from Allah , the Exalted in Might, the Wise}* [Aal Imran 3:126]. And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper}* [al-Baqarah 2:107]. And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says regarding guidance: *{Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided}* [al-Qasas 28:56]. And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ said: *{Whoever Allah guides - he is the [rightly] guided}* [al-A'raf 7:178].

All of these concepts are connected to the concept of Allah's rububiyah (Lordship) and these concepts are to be understood so that one may affirm true servitude to Allah and affirm that He is the only One Who is deserving of such servitude.

Benefit **Believing in the oneness of Lordship (Tawhid ar-rububiyah) implies belief in the oneness of divinity and worshipping Allah Alone (Tawhid al-uluhiyah):**

Hence you will find that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has ordained that believing in Him as the only Lord is the reason why we believe that He Alone is deserving of our servitude and that we should worship only Him. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them - so worship Him and have patience for His worship. Do you know of any similarity to Him?}* [Maryam 19:65]. In other words, He Alone is deserving of worship, because He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and everything between them.

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous}* [al-Baqarah 2:21]; in other words, worship Him Alone, because He is the Creator.

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, those you worship besides Allah do not possess for you [the power of] provision. So seek from Allah provision and worship Him and be grateful to Him. To Him you will be returned}* [al-Ankabut 29:17]. Thus Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has made the fact that He is the One Who possesses the power of provision, the reason why He Alone is deserving of servitude and worship.

The disbelievers and the polytheists affirm the oneness of Lordship

Do the disbelievers affirm the oneness of Lordship?

Answer: All of creation affirms the oneness of Lordship; even the disbelievers and polytheists affirm the oneness of Lordship. There is a great deal of evidence to that effect, including the following:

1. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And if you asked them, "Who created the heavens and earth?" they would surely say, "Allah"}* [Luqman 31:25].

2. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "In whose hand is the realm of all things - and He protects while none can protect against Him - if you should know?" They will say, "[All belongs] to Allah"}* [al-Mu'minun 23:88-89].

3. The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us how Iblees affirmed the Lordship of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ: *{[Iblees] said, "My Lord, because You have put me in error…"}* [al-Hijr 15:39].

4 Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says, regarding the affirmation of the oneness of Lordship by all of the disbelievers and polytheists: *{If you asked them, "Who created the heavens and earth and subjected the sun and the moon?" they would surely say, "Allah." Then how are they deluded?}* [al-Ankabut 29:61].

5 The verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Or who controls hearing and sight and who brings the living out of the dead and brings the dead out of the living and who arranges [every] matter?" They will say, "Allah"}* [Yunus 10:31].

These texts, as you can see, clearly state that the disbelievers affirm the fact that Allah is the Creator and Provider, in His hand is the sovereignty and dominion of all things, He protects while none can protect against Him, He controls all things, He brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living, and all of that is connected to His being ar-Rabb, as noted above.

Benefit

Affirming this type of Tawhid – Tawhid ar-rububiyah – is not sufficient on its own for a person to enter the religion of Islam, and is not a means of attaining salvation in the Hereafter and admittance to Paradise. This is because the disbelievers and the polytheists acknowledge it, yet despite that, Allah ruled that they should enter Hell and abide therein forever. He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, they who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture and the polytheists will be in the fire of Hell, abiding eternally therein. Those are the worst of creatures}* [al-Bayinah 98:6].

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: "Tawhid does not mean merely affirming that there is no creator except Allah, and that Allah is the Lord (Rabb) and sovereign of all things, as the idol worshippers used to affirm, yet they associated others with Allah. Rather Tawhid includes loving Allah, submitting to Him, humbling oneself before Him, obeying Him completely, worshipping Him Alone with sincere devotion and seeking His pleasure in all that one says and does". End quote.

Impact of affirming the oneness of Lordship on one's faith

Affirming the oneness of Lordship (Tawhid ar-rububiyah) has a significant impact on one's faith, the most important aspects of which are as follows:

1. Loving Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, as He says: *{But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah}* [al-Baqarah 2:165]. For He جَلَّ وَعَلَا is the Lord (ar-Rabb) Who cares for (yurabbi) His slaves and showers them with blessings, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Or who controls hearing and sight"}* [Yunus 10:31].

2. Venerating Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, as He says: *{And say, "Praise to Allah , who has not taken a son and has had no partner in [His] dominion and has no [need of a] protector out of weakness; and glorify Him with [great] glorification"}* [al-Isra 17:111].

3. Putting one's trust in Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and delegating one's affairs to Him, as He says: *{Indeed, I have relied upon Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature but that He holds its forelock. Indeed, my Lord is on a path [that is] straight}* [Hud 11:56]; *{and upon their Lord they rely}* [al-Anfal 8:2].

4. Hastening to turn to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and seek His help at times of hardship and distress. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, "Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand from the angels, following one another"}* [al-Anfal 8:9].

5. Turning in repentance to Allah and humbling oneself before Him, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{They said, "Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers"}* [al-A'raf 7:23].

6

Submitting to Allah and showing humility before Him عَزَّوَجَلَّ as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{When his Lord said to him, "Submit", he said "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds"}* [al-Baqarah 2:131].

7

Fearing Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us that the son of Adam said: *{Indeed, I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds}* [al-Ma'idah 5:28].

8

Using reason to reflect and contemplate, as in the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the [great] ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every [kind of] moving creature, and [His] directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are signs for a people who use reason}* [al-Baqarah 2:164].

9

Attaining true sincerity, as in the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, I have turned my face toward He who created the heavens and the earth, inclining toward truth, and I am not of those who associate others with Allah}* [al-An'am 6:79].

10

Acceptance of the will and decree of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Therefore everything that happens in this world happens by His creation and control, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah , and indeed to Him we will return"}* [al-Baqarah 2:155-156].

Activities

1. Explain the meaning of the word rububiyah (lordship). How does this word imply the following concepts: creation, sovereignty and control?

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2. There are those who say that beings other than Allah can be creators, and they quote Quran to support that view. What is their evidence? And what is the response to that?

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3. Explain the connection between Tawhid ar-rububiyah (oneness of Lordship) and Tawhid al-uluhiyah (oneness of divinity), quoting Quranic texts as evidence for that.

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4. What is the attitude of the disbelievers with regard to Tawhid ar-rububiyah (oneness of Lordship), and how does it benefit them? Quote evidence for what you say.

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Evidence for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ other than the religious texts

When talking to nonbelievers, atheists and others, it is not appropriate to quote religious texts to them, for their response will be that they do not accept them. Therefore it is essential to give evidence other than the religious texts for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. This is limited to the following:

- Innate human nature (fitrah)
- Reason and common sense
- Tangible, visible evidence

Evidence of innate human nature (fitrah) | **Evidence of reason and common sense** | **Tangible, visible evidence.**

1 Evidence of innate human nature (fitrah) for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

Every creature has been created with an innate inclination to believe in the Creator, without having to even think about it or learn about it, and he will not be diverted from this natural inclination except in the case of one who is taught something different that diverts him from that. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Every child is born in a state of fitrah, then his parents make him into a Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian».** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

He did not say "or they make him into a Muslim," because he is already Muslim by nature, and naturally affirms the oneness of Allah. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion}* [ar-Rum 30:30].

Evidence of sound human nature includes the fact that when a person is in dire straits, he turns to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. If some calamity befalls him or he is faced with danger, he calls upon Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and seeks His help. Allah has mentioned this in more than one place in His holy Book, including the following verses:

{And when adversity touches you at sea, lost are [all] those you invoke except for Him. But when He delivers you to the land, you turn away [from Him]. And ever is man ungrateful} [al-Isra 17:67] and *{And when they board a ship, they supplicate Allah, sincere to Him in religion. But when He delivers them to the land, at once they associate others with Him}* [al-Ankabut 29:65].

This is the evidence of innate human nature, it is so strong that no one can ward it off. Sometimes a person finds himself instinctively turning to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ at times of distress and calamity. No one directs him to do this; rather it is the natural disposition that Allah has instilled in His creation.

If people were left alone and listened only to the natural inclination that is instilled in them, they would not incline towards anything or anyone other than their Lord; they would turn to Him to attain that which benefits them and wards off that which is harmful to them; they would turn to Him in devotion, worship, submission and humility.

2 Evidence of reason and common sense:

This evidence is based on the fact that there must be a creator for every created thing. This is a fact that everyone with sound reasoning accepts.

When the Bedouin was asked about the existence of Allah, he said, on the basis of reason and common sense: The presence of dung indicates that a camel was there, and footprints indicate that someone passed by. The heaven with its big stars, the earth with its varied terrain and the sea with its waves, do they not indicate the existence of the All-Knowing, the All-Aware?

What a beautiful way of reaching that conclusion, and what amazing logic and eloquence!

It is narrated that some atheists asked one of the scholars to debate with them about the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and made an appointment for that debate. The scholar came late, and that was done deliberately. When he came to them and they asked him why he was late, he said: A river prevented me from coming to you, and I could not find anyone to transport me to you. But I did not have to wait for long until a boat came along, with no helmsman to steer it, so I embarked on it and it brought me to you. The atheists were astounded, and they said: What on earth are you talking about?!

He said to them: You deny that this universe has a creator, but you do not believe that a boat could not have a helmsman?! They accepted his argument and affirmed the existence of Allah.

The Quran refers to this, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain}* [at-Tur 52:35-36].

There are only two possibilities, with no third:

The first possibility:

That this universe has no creator. This is impossible and is contrary to reason, because created things must inevitably have a creator, and made things must have a maker, for that which does not exist cannot create.

The second possibility:

That they created themselves and created the heavens and the earth. This is also impossible, and no one claims that he created himself, let alone the heavens and the earth.

So the only option left is that there must be One Who brought it into existence and created it, namely Allah the Lord of the Worlds.

This evidence is extremely powerful and clear. Hence when Jubayr ibn Mut'im رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ heard it, he said: "My heart almost leapt out of place". Narrated by al-Bukhari.

The following debate took place between a wise believer and a confused atheist:

That atheist said to the believer: "Do you believe in the existence of Allah?" He said: "Yes, undoubtedly." "Have you seen Him?" "No." "Have you heard Him?" "No." "Have you smelled Him or touched Him?" "No." "Then how can you believe in Him?"

The wise believer said to the atheist: "Are you a man of reason?" He said: "Yes." "Have you seen your reason?" "No." "Have you heard it?" "No." "Have you smelt it or touched it?" "No." "Then how can you claim to be a man of reason?"

Further evidence based on reason: reflection and contemplation:

The one who contemplates these heavens with their great height and vastness, and what they contain of shining stars and planets both great and small, moving and fixed, and sees how they move around the polestar every night, and how they all have their own movements, and looks at the seas and oceans that surround the land on all sides, and the mountains that are placed on earth so that it will remain stable and the people living on it will be able to settle, with all their different shapes and colours, as Allah says: *{And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black, And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving}* [Fatir 35:27-28].

And also contemplates the rivers that flow from one region to another, bringing benefits to people, and sees what is scattered throughout the earth of various types of animals, and plants with different tastes, shapes and colours, even though they all grow in soil and water; he will realize that there is a Maker, and he will appreciate His immense power, wisdom and mercy towards His creation, His kindness towards them and His care for them; there is no god but He and no Lord except He, in Him I put my trust and to Him I turn.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the [great] ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every [kind of] moving creature, and [His] directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are signs for a people who use reason}* [al-Baqarah 2:164].

Ash-Shafi'i was asked about the existence of the Maker. He said: "These mulberry leaves all have the same taste. The silkworm eats them and produces silk. The bee eats them and produces honey. The sheep, camels and cattle eat them and they produce dung. The gazelle eats them and produces musk. Yet they all eat the same thing".

The poet said:

Reflect upon the plants of the earth
And look at what Allah has created
Flowers like beautiful silver eyes
With pupils of golden ingots
On peridot stems, testifying
That Allah has no partner

3 Tangible, visible evidence

Tangible, visible evidence of the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is of two types:

The first is: His answering those who call upon Him, seek His help and are in distress:

Look at those who find themselves in dire straits and faced with calamity and danger on land, sea and in the air. Those who are in despair because of their problems, sickness and pain, and see how necessity and desperation compels them to turn to their Lord and God, calling upon Him with humility, asking of Him and seeking His generosity. So He answers their supplication, relieves their distress, and meets their needs.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has made this clear evidence of His existence, as He says: *{Is He [not best] who responds to the desperate one when he calls upon Him and removes evil and makes you inheritors of the earth? Is there a deity with Allah? Little do you remember}* [an-Naml 27:62].

Undoubtedly the response to the prayers of the prophets, messengers and the righteous, and the relief of their distress, is among the greatest evidence of the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Real life is full of stories of answered prayers and divine help granted to those in distress, which definitively proves the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And [mention] Noah, when he called [to Allah] before [that time], so We responded to him and saved him and his family from the great flood}* [al-Anbiya 21:76].

{[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you} [al-Anfal 8:9].

The prayers of those who call upon Allah are still being answered, and we still see that in our own time, for those who sincerely turn to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and fulfil the conditions of supplications being answered.

The second is: the miracles of the Prophets:

The signs of the Prophets, which are called miracles, and which people saw or heard of them, offer definitive proof of the existence of the One Who sent them, namely Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, because these are things that are beyond the capability of human beings; Allah causes them to happen for the purpose of supporting His messengers and causing them to prevail.

One example of that is: the sign of Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, when Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ commanded him: *{Strike with your staff the sea}* [ash-Shu'ara 26:63], so he struck the sea and it parted, leaving twelve dry pathways, and the water between them was like mountains. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Then We inspired to Moses, "Strike with your staff the sea," and it parted, and each portion was like a great towering mountain}* [ash-Shu'ara 26:63].

A second example is: the sign of Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, as he used to bring the dead back to life and bring them forth from their graves by Allah's permission. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us that he said: *{... and I give life to the dead - by permission of Allah}* [Aal Imran 3:49]. And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and when you brought forth the dead with My permission}* [al-Ma'idah 5:110].

A third example: the miracle of our Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ when Quraysh demanded a sign and a miracle from him, so he pointed to the moon and it split in two, and the people saw that. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says concerning that: *{The Hour has come near, and the moon has split [in two], And if they see a miracle, they turn away and say, 'Passing magic'}* [al-Qamar 54:1-2].

Other examples of that are seen in the following verses: Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And Noah had certainly called Us, and [We are] the best of responders}* [as-Saffat 37:75].

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ also tells us about Nuh: *{So he invoked his Lord, "Indeed, I am overpowered, so help." Then We opened the gates of the heaven with rain pouring down}* [al-Qamar 54:10-11].

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us about Yunus: *{And [mention] the man of the fish, when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, "There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers." So We responded to him and saved him from the distress. And thus do We save the believers}* [al-Anbiya 21:87-88].

These are tangible, visible signs that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ brought about to support His Messengers and cause them to prevail. They offer definitive evidence of His existence, عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Activities

1. Why is there a discussion in this book on non-textual evidence for the existence of Allah, and to whom is that primarily addressed?

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2. Among the greatest proof of the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is visible, tangible evidence. Discuss this.

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3. Write an essay in which you mention the specious arguments of the atheists and a response to them.

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4. Why were the miracles of the Prophets incontrovertible proof for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ?

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And Allah is the source of strength.

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Index of lectures

Number of lecture	Beginning of lecture	Number of page on which the lecture begins	Week in which the lecture is given
1	Introduction to sound aqeedah	11	Week 1
2	(2): It is the call of all of the Messengers	13	Week 1
3	Sources of sound aqeedah	16	Week 2
4	The second source: the sound Prophetic Sunnah	20	Week 2
5	The basic principles set out by Ahl as-Sunnah for verifying issues of aqeedah	25	Week 3
6	(4) The texts of the Quran and sahih Sunnah are to be understood in accordance with the understanding of the Sahabah	28	Week 3
7	Causes of deviation from sound aqeedah	35	Week 4
8	(3) Following whims and desires	38	Week 4
9	Arrogance	41	Week 5
10	Secondly: Means of protecting oneself against deviating from sound aqeedah	44	Week 5
11	(4) Refraining from going to extremes in religion, and being cautious to avoid that	46	Week 6
12	Definition and importance of Tawhid	51	Week 6

Index of lectures

Number of lecture	Beginning of lecture	Number of page on which the lecture begins	Week in which the lecture is given
13	Impact of Tawhid on the individual	53	Week 7
14	(7) It is the means of attaining security in this world and the hereafter	55	Week 7
15	Impact of Tawhid on the individual	57	Week 8
16	Explaining that Tawhid is Islam	59	Week 8
17	The pillars of Tawhid	63	Week 9
18	The categories of Tawhid	68	Week 9
19	Further evidence based on reason: reflection and contemplation	70	Week 10
20	How the disbelievers and polytheists affirm Tawhid ar-Rububiyah (oneness of divine Lordship)	72	Week 10
21	Impacts of belief in Tawhid ar-Rububiyah (oneness of divine Lordship)	74	Week 11
22	Evidence for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ other than the religious texts	77	Week 11
23	(2) Evidence of reason and common sense	78	Week 12
24	(3) Tangible, visible evidence	81	Week 12

Contents

11 Introduction to sound aqeedah

16 Sources of sound aqeedah

25 The basic principles set out by Ahl as-Sunnah for verifying issues of aqeedah

29 The bidah of reinterpreting the text

35 Causes of deviation from sound aqeedah

38 Exaggerating about the righteous

44 Means of protecting oneself against deviating from sound aqeedah

51 Definition and importance of Tawhid

59 Explanation that Tawhid is Islam, and it is the religion of all the Messengers

61 Regarding the phrase "the three heavenly religions"

65 The pillars of Tawhid

67 Freedom of belief

68 The categories of Tawhid

72 How the disbelievers and polytheists affirm Tawhid ar-Rububiyah (oneness of divine Lordship)

77 Evidence for the existence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ other than the religious texts

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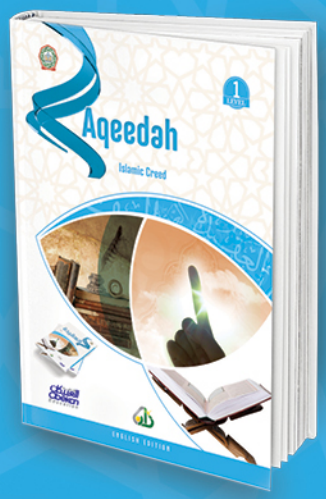

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