

# Tawheed

## Monotheism in Islam

Worship

Love

Laws

Deeds

Gains

Trust

Attributes



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## Introduction to Tawheed

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لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“There is no god except You, Glory be to You, Indeed I have been unjust to myself.”

Suratul Ambiya – 21:87

**Recite 121 times after Fajr Salaa for 40 days to overcome an impossible to manage difficulty. For fulfilment of hajat recite 730 times after two rakats salaa (preferably after midnight) For removal of worrisome task recite two rakats salaa and then 200 times in sijda after the salaa.**

Allah! The very name evokes the widest range of opinions and emotions. Many who claim to reject Allah are actually rejecting a false definition of tawheed. If they were presented with an accurate description, there might be no argument.

Every Muslim must ask him/herself: What is tawheed? Why do I need tawheed in my life? How do I practically apply it to my life? How we answer these questions will define, more than anything else, who one is and how one lives his/her life. Just as the well being of a tree depends on the strength of it's roots – the well being of the human being depends on the strength of belief in usool – tawheed being the primary root which draws nourishment from divine energy.

The Prophet (pbuh) said – “Say – Laa Ilaaha Illallah and you will be successful” Meaning living it will bring a revolution in lives here and hereafter.

Any human definition of Allah will however be limited to the boundaries of human knowledge. Since Allah is a reality, He must be defined in His terms and not ours for He also created the laws of

logic and reason, No matter how sophisticated a machine may be, it cannot tell us about the engineer that created it or about the vision and hidden forces that inspired him/her to create it.

Why is it that when we talk about work, or leisure, we have a large vocabulary of words, yet when it comes to talk about our inner feelings, we struggle for words? Should it not be easier to talk about that which is our essence than external matters? And yet, the more stronger and closer the feeling, the fewer words we find. The reason for this paradox is that human language is a limited tool – to convey the meaning intensity of deep feelings we use poetry, art or even silence. We can look at a beautiful painting and feel it's effect but are unable to verbalise the effect. We can hear a recitation of Qur'an and Dua and feel unable to convey what it did to us. A classical example that many site is when they see the Ka'ba - an extraordinary sense of peace prevails - no words can describe the feeling. Similarly, we have insufficient tools to describe the reality of tawheed. So how do we know He exists? The same way that we know our nafs exists even though we are unable to touch it or define it.

To begin to understand tawheed, we must learn to go beyond our mind, ego and tools of perception. To look for Allah with our eyes is to try to capture the sun's rays in our hands. It can only happen if we remove obstacles of self centeredness, dishonesty, ignorance and fear from our lives.

In Sermon 1 of Nahjul Balagha Imam Ali (pbuh) says. "Awwalud deenu ma'rifatuhu....." The foremost of deen is to recognise Him... Imam Ali (pbuh) has also said: "One who has recognised him/herself has recognised his/her Rabb". To understand Him we will first try and understand ourselves. Let's follow a 7 step programme –

1. **Face the truth** – Challenge your beliefs right now – Remember that the laws of Allah are like the law of gravity – they simply are there – you don't have a vote.

2. **Recognise the difference between reality and your perception** of it..
3. **Accept that you are accountable for yourself** – no-one forced you to be what you are – you made the choice, you said the words, you thought the thoughts .....and more important you get what you give.
4. **Free yourself from the bonds of hatred, anger and resentment** – Recognise the power of forgiveness.
5. **Identify what you really want** – In other words what do you classify as success
6. **Search for a role model and study every aspect of his/her life** – ‘Indeed for you in the messenger of Allah is the most perfect example’ Suratul Ahzaab 33:21
7. **Act NOW** – Plan a strategy and focus

Allah in the Qur’an in Suratul A’raf 7:157 "The Prophet removes all arduous rules and customs that human beings had placed on their necks like chains. So those who believe in him, respect him and aid him, who follow the light that has been revealed to him, they are, in truth, those who are saved in this world."

By understanding tawheed as the essence of absolute reality, we come to the awesome realisation that there is none/nothing else like Him – just as is summed up in Suratul Ikhlas. 112:1-5

**Tawheed** therefore is the belief in the One and Only God – Allah after rejecting all other idols – physical or mental. Thus the awe inspiring slogan for every Muslim (There is no God except Allah) is in essence a life strategy to be worked at.

## **Acknowledgement of Allah**

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“Awwalud deenu ma’rifatuhu” The foremost of deen is to recognise Him... (that fire burns is ‘ilm – experiencing burning is ma’rifa) Nahjul balagha Sermon 1 cont...”wa kamaalu ma’rifatihit tasdeequ bih..” The perfection of cognition of Him is to acknowledge/testify to Him – “..wa kamaalut tasdeeqi bihi tawheeduhu...”The perfection of acknowledging/testifying Him is to believe in tawheed –

The first aspect of tawheed is to acknowledge His existence. (Iqraar biwujohillah) It is to acknowledge a reality that is far greater than ourselves, and acknowledge that our reality is not real on it’s own, but a manifestation of divine energy. Allah is Wajibul Wujood – Self Existent and all other creation are Mumkinul Wujood – Possible existences. By acknowledging that our human reality is really but a minute part of an all encompassing reality – we are able to move beyond boundaries of human existence. Once we rise above the limits of human thought, we can incorporate this divine energy in our logic, emotions, and most important in our conduct. As we are told by the Prophet (pbuh) – ‘Takhallaqu akhlaqullah” Adopt the akhlaq of Allah – As He is Rahmaan, you too must be merciful. As He is Raheem, you too must be compassionate.....and so on.

During the time of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) some Arabs of the desert (believed to be from the tribe of Banu Asad) embraced Islam. Then they claimed that they were believers. Allah instructed the Prophet to tell them that they should claim to be Muslims, not Mu'mins "for belief/faith has not yet penetrated" their hearts (Qur'an 49:14).

In the next ayah (49:15) Allah presents the salient features of the mu’mineen. He says: "They alone are believers who come to believe in Allah and His Messenger, then never doubt again, and strive with

their wealth and their lives in the way of God. They are the truthful [in their claim]."

The Prophet (pbuh) said: Al-Islam is (that which is) manifest while Eimaan is (found) in the heart. Imam Ja`far as-Sadiq (pbuh) said: Islam means protecting his (i.e. Muslim's) blood, fulfilling his trust, permission to marry him, but thawaab is based on Eimaan. Imam as-Sadiq (pbuh) said: Eimaan includes Islam, but Islam does not include Eimaan. Eimaan is what has been established in the hearts. Whilst al-Islam is that through which [the rights of] marriage, inheritance and protection of life are [enjoined]. "Tafseere Namuneh", v. 22, pp. 197 -199, under the discussion of these two ayaat of Surat Hujuraat.

Therefore Islam means:

- 1) Saying the Kalimat Shahaadatayn without hypocrisy;
- 2) Having Islamic appearances (e.g. name, dress, etiquettes) in the external life of a Muslim;
- 3) Action may or may not follow the belief; and
- 4) That which necessitates social and legal rights between Muslims.

Eimaan, on the other hand, means:

- 1) Saying the with full conviction;
- 2) Complete obedience to the Islamic teachings appearing in the Holy Qura'n, and what has been taught and practiced by the Prophet (pbuh);
- 3) Being firm in belief without harbouring any doubts and scepticism about Allah and His messenger;
- 4) Striving with wealth and life in the way of Islam;
- 5) Action always follows belief;
- 6) That which results in Allah's forgiveness, mercy, pleasure and reward.

## Acknowledging Allah

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Anything that is profusely evident (kathratu dhuhur) ceases to exist – too much of existence. E.g. too much of light blinds you. Existence not difficult to prove – difficult to prove non-existence. But for the sake of engaging the mind – proofs given.

“....Is there doubt about Allah, the original Creator(One who creates without precedence) of the heavens and the earth? He invites you to forgive you your faults and to respite you till an appointed term....” Suratu Ibraheem 14:10

Consider phenomenon like earthquakes, cyclones...etc... which entail Salaatul Ayaat (salaat for signs of Allah)

Pascal’s bet – Although first put forward by Imam Ali (pbuh) – Is there, God or not? Bet is that if there is God and Qiyama, then the good benefit and the evil suffer – If no God or Qiyama then all are equal – So either way those who are good benefit.

An Arab once asked Imam Ali (pbuh) - “Give me simple proof on the existence of Allah?” Imam said” The footprints of your camel proves that a camel passed. Does not the whole universe with it’s opaqueness and transparency prove that there was a Creator?”

In Hadithe Mufadhal, Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) explains to his companion Mufadhal – Look at the egg – the white and the yellow – within the shell they do not mix – you do not know whether the chick is male or female – development results into a chicken – All this done without a Creator?

Ibn Mukaffa to Imam Sadiq (pbuh) – “Yabna Rasulillah! If Allah came himself, then no problems for no two people would have quarrelled over His existence. Why did He keep hijab? Why send Prophets? If



He lived with His Creation, eiman would be stronger!” Imam replied: “When did Allah hide Himself from you? HE has shown you your creation from what you were not. He made you grow from little, gave you strength after weakness and vice versa, sickness after health and vice versa, pleasure after anger and vice versa, grief after joy and vice versa, love after hatred and vice versa, resolution after laxity and vice versa, desire after dislike and vice versa, inclination after fear and vice versa, hope after hopelessness and vice versa, and the appearance of a thought when it was not there and the removal of something from your mind although previously you fervently believed in it.....” before Imam could finish, he said – “If you go on like this I will lose my mind.” .....

Imam Husayn (pbuh) has said in Dua ‘Arafa:

“When/Where were You hidden that we should require proof that You were there?” If we are looking for a person then we will always say Where?

At the time of Imam Musa Kadhim (pbuh) Greek philosophy had entered Arabia and many thinkers developed. The court of Harun and Mamun Rashid were filled with thinker. Imam on explaining tawheed said:

“Nothing but 3 circumstances

1. Either you created yourself
2. Or there as automatum
3. Or Someone created you.

“If you say you created yourself, then you are pre-supposing your existence before you are created. If things created by themselves (automatum) non existence cannot ever become existence. Therefore only possible answer – Someone created and that is none other than HIM.”

In essence acknowledgement comes from the human being’s God seeking nature (fitra). Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) when asked by one Zurarah

“What do you say about Allah’s creation (fitrah) upon which He originated humankind?”

Imam said: “He originated humankind upon **tawheed**”. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (pbuh) said: “Kullu mawludin yuladu ‘alal fitra” – Every child is born on the fitra.

These ahadith are based on the aya – Suratur Room 30:30 “Then set your face upright for deen as a human being of pure faith – Allah’s fitrah upon which He originated humankind. There is no changing Allah’s creation. That is the right deen, but most human beings know it not.”

To understand that tawheed is in the fitrah of human beings – we need to understand some preliminaries – one of the qualities of human nature is to love perfection and contentment – both which can only be found in Allah.

## Acquisition of Mulk

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Nahjul Balagha Sermon 1 - "Awwalud deenu ma'rifatuhu" The foremost of deen is to recognise Him... (that fire burns is 'ilm – experiencing burning is ma'rifa) "...wa kamaalu ma'rifatihit tasdeequ bih.." The perfection of cognition of Him is to acknowledge/testify to Him – "...wa kamaalut tasdeeqi bihi tawheeduhu..."The perfection of acknowledging/testifying Him is to believe in tawheed.

Human beings will always ask before anything – What is there in this for me? So what is the benefit of being a muwahhid? Tawheed ensures the reaching of the full potential of the mulk granted to us – absolute authority – where there is no subjugation – there is freedom with connection only to Allah. The mulk must be one which is achievable at any age, any era, under any circumstance and for each gender.

In philosophy, material mulk is l'tibaari (that which is only valuable as long as there is nothing else which overrides it value at a later date) e.g. currency..... True milkiyyat is that where the haakim has total authority over his/her mulk. The Maalik of Mulk is only Allah. In His Mulk, there is a moral order where the human being was created and an announcement made "Indeed We have created the human being in the best of makes" Suratut Teen 95:4 "Do not think of yourself as a small creation, for in you is a great world" (fiyka tawal aalamul akber) Imam Ali (pbuh) explaining 'best of makes'.

The 'nafs' is the undeveloped kingdom granted to each human being (autonomy given to develop as we wish) – In this kingdom we are given an ambassador in this kingdom to guide us towards a successful thriving kingdom if we wish to follow it – 'Then He inspired it (the nafs) to understand what is right and wrong for it ' Qur'an – Suratush Shams 91:8

Conscience is the embassy from Allah which is also a moral monitor. If the conscience is constantly opposed, it is withdrawn.

The achievement in the world attained by becoming a Muwahhid (a true believer of tawheed) is to reach the full potential of the nafs which is 'nafsul mutmainna'. In other words when the evolutionary (irtiqaa) existence of this world meets the revelatory (tanzili). It is the nafs that says: "Everything will end, everything is relative except He from whom I came and to whom I shall return." The Qur'an says: "O Nafsul Mutmainna, return to your Lord, well pleased and well pleasing; Enter among My servants; Enter My Janna." Qur'an 89:28-30

Let's look at the achievement in the hereafter – Firstly what is Janna? To English words are often used to translate it into English – Paradise and Heaven. Jannah is a noun originating from the word 'janana' meaning to hide, to cover. The word majnoon meaning 'crazy' is from the same root meaning one whose mind is covered. Jinn are called by this name because they are hidden. Jannah literally means a hidden land one that is ghayb for us at present. However, the location where Prophet Adam & Hawwa (pbuh) lived is also referred to as Janna in the Qur'an (7:19, 2:35) but was not hidden from them.

In the Qur'an, Allah uses the word Janna in 67 ayaat in 3 ways.

1. Without being associated with the definite article Al (The) e.g. Suratul Baqara 2:265,266, 17:91, 25:8, 34:15,16, 6:141, 50:9, 78:16.
2. Here Janna is mentioned with Al (The) but with earthly descriptions e.g. 2:35 - abode of Adam (pbuh), 7:19,22 – contains leaves and food, 20:117-121 – described having the essentials of life –food, water, shelter.
3. Here Janna is mentioned with Al (The) but with non-earthly descriptions. E.g. 3:133 – it's width is equal to the skies and

the earth and prepared for those with taqwa, who spend in the way of Allah in ease and difficulty, who restrain anger and are muhsineen. 13:35 – rivers underneath, perpetual food and shade. 37:43.

The description of the third type where righteous human beings are to end is different from the one in which Prophet Adam (pbuh) was created. The Janna where Prophet Adam (pbuh) resided is an earthly Janna in a mountainous region in which rivers flow and animals live. The final Janna is a heavenly abode.

Besides the entry to this heavenly abode the greatest of achievements is the pleasure of Allah.

## Tawheed fil 'Ibada

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The first stage of tawheed is TAWHEED FIL 'IBADA (Tawheed in worship).

The first step is to ensure that there is ikhlaas in the niyya. Hat is ikhlaas? "Al Ikhlasu tasfiyatul 'amal min kulli shawb" Ikhlaas is removing all impurities from a deed. It means keeping an action free from other than Allah having a role in it. There should be no riya' or suma'a in his/her ibada.

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) has said"....To persevere in an action until it becomes sincere is more difficult than performing the action itself, and sincerity in action lies in that you should not desire anyone to praise you for it except Allah, and niyya supersedes action..Lo! Indeed niyya is the action itself" Then he recited the aya of Qur'an 17:48 "Say! Everyone acts according to his character (shakilatihi), adding, "Shakila means niyya" Usulul Kafi Babul Ikhlas hadith no 4

Imam Ali (pbuh) has said: "To judge the ikhlaas in your niyya, look at how you pray 2 rakats salaa in public and how you pray when you are alone".

Riya' and Suma'a are shirk – both outward and inward shirk must be avoided. The Prophet (pbuh) said to his companions " I fear that shirk will creep in on you like a black ant on a black rock on a dark night."

The second step is the rightness and perfection of the actions, which is tantamount to their efficient force.

Thirdly concentrate on Allah. How? 'Tafakkaru fi khalqillah..." Think of Him through His creation, not Him. Prophet (pbuh) once said he would give a red camel to whoever prayed salaa thinking only of Allah. All hesitated – Imam Ali (pbuh) prayed and returned. Prophet (pbuh) told him – "You thought that if you got the camel you would

give it away in His way when you prayed” Imam replied that it was the only way to think only of Allah for there is no other way”

## **Tawheed fis Sifaat (attributes)**

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The second stage of tawheed is TAWHEED FIS SIFAAT (ATTRIBUTES)  
The acquiring of knowledge about the attributes of Allah is closely related to our knowledge of recognition of Allah. The actual attributes of Allah are three: Hayy (Ever living), 'Ālim (All Knowledgeable), Qadir (Power over everything) All the other attributes are branches of these three. The meaning of sifaat is to negate the opposite as Imam Ali (pbuh) says in his sermon – We are asserting the subutiyya to negate the opposite. E.g. When I say He is 'Aalim, I am saying He is not Jaahil (ignorant).

The attributes of Allah cannot be separated from Him. e.g. 'Ālim - The one who is knowledgeable. Whilst a human being acquires knowledge and is still a human being even without knowledge, Allah is knowledge itself. We try to understand Him through His Names but He is far superior to the names. 6<sup>th</sup> Imam to his companion Hisham – “Whoever worships the name without meaning is a Kafir, whoever worships the name and meaning is a Mushrik, whoever worships meaning alone is a Muslim.”

Whatever one thinks of Allah, He is not that. We must therefore think of Allah in terms of His attributes which are termed as Asmaa ul Husnaa (The most beautiful names). In Suratu Bani Israil 17:110, Allah says: “Say (O Muhammad): Call upon Allah or call upon The Merciful, whichever you call upon, He has the best names.....” The word Allah in the Qur’an is the name of an essence of His 99 beautiful names and qualities like Merciful, Kind, Knowing..... Whatever little information the human being can get about Allah can only be acquired through His names. Otherwise, we have no access.

Our whole word in essence is a name of Allah because nothing which exists can come into existence automatically. These qualities and Names are therefore an infra-structure for human akhlaq because in Islam, the human being is the representative of Allah. The Prophet (pbuh) has said: “Adopt the akhlaq of Allah” Tawheed



fi Sifaat – therefore means to be able to first find out His attributes, to study them and then to live them. It must reflect in our day to day conduct in every aspect of our life.

Practical ways to begin dhikr (“Remember Me, I will remember you” Suratul Baqara 2:152 “Those who believe in their hearts being at rest in the dhikr of Allah, in the dhikr of Allah are at rest hearts of those who believe and do righteous deeds....” Suratur Ra’d 13:28) “An hour’s meditation is more excellent than a year’s worship.”

Prophet (pbuh) – Tahara is necessary, to refrain from overindulgence in food....., choose a tahir place, face qibla, voice should be modulated between silent and loud, believe that you will get a response, recite earnestly, psyche your inward attitude towards repentance, rejection of negative traits and turn to Allah. It is best to be alone, the best time is after wajib salaa, and/or in the quiet of the night between midnight and the time of Salatul Fajr.

Besides other properties each of the 28 letters of the ‘Arabic alphabet have numerical powers based on the Qur’anic aya – “And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We do not send it down but it’s measure (number) is known.” Suratul Hijr 15:21 Each of the Asmaul Husna has in this way, an inherent number – so if moral healing is sought through the ‘ilm of numbers – a correspondence is sought with the particular ism (name,attribute...)

The human being was asked to form a covenant with Allah – “And when your Rabb too the seed of the children of Adam from their loins and made them bear witness against their own nafs – Am I not your Rabb? They said – Yes! We bear witness.....” Suratul A’raf 7:172. “We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it, and the human being carried it.....” Suratul Ahzaab – 33:72 Having accepted this trust it sets up a moral responsibility to carry it out. In return the nafs receives salvation (najat) and eternal life. The trusteeship includes 3 relationships

1. Theo-ethics Between the human self and Allah’s revelations

2. Psycho-ethics – Between the human self and the human self
3. Socio-ethics – Between the self and all other creations.

**Theo-ethics** - Allah reveals Himself through His attributes. It is effected by the realisation that these qualities belong only to Allah allowing us to sense real ubudiyya (connection, servitude) to Him alone. When human being consider themselves without Allah, they manifest their false ego – Theo-ethics presents reality – that absolute power lies only with Allah. The aim is to study each ism (name, attribute).

**Psycho-ethics** – This involves applying the attribute to oneself in order to learn self-restraint through discipline, moderation, courage, wisdom.

**Socio-ethics** – Here ones relation to others proves whether one has achieved the stage of tawheed fis sifaat. It then has the potential to heal society as a whole when each individual follows it.

We will look at the attributes of Al-‘Aalim, Al-Hayy, Al-Qaadir. Al-‘Adl and Al-Lateef.

## **AL-'AALIM (ALL – KNOWING)**

“..And of all things, He is The Knower” Suratul Baqara 2:29 Number Symbol **150**

Recite to illuminate the heart and mind increases intuition, for hajaat go to a place under the open sky and after 2 rakats salaa recite Yaa 'Aalim 1000 times.

Theo-ethics He knows the hidden and the manifest, small and great, first and last in the most complete manner possible.

Psycho-ethics Self examination – ‘Take account of your actions before Allah takes account of you, weigh yourself before you are weighed, die before you die’ Prophet (pbuh) – to reflect on every act and see how it enabled one to reach one’s goal – Nurturing the following characteristics – Never swear in the name of Allah, deliberately or accidentally, rightly or wrongly, never lie, never break a promise, never intend ill to another person, never make accusations, never considering oneself higher than others...

Socio-ethics To give the rights to others in the right measure, To draw oneself and others to Allah through speech, actions..., to learn to be quick not to judge others by their outer form, to pray for and strive for intuitive knowledge... e.g. Prophet Musa (pbuh) and the shepherd, friend of Marhum Ayatullah Al-Khui,...

**AL-HAYY (EVER-LIVING)**

“Allah, There is no god but He, The Ever Living, The Self Existent.....”

Suratul Baqara 2:255

Number Symbol **18**

Recite for a long life and to be cured of illness.

Theo-ethics - To know that He is not mayyit and that He is, was and will be. He is Absolute Life itself.

Psycho-ethics - To display contentment which means to be satisfied with whatever Allah wills after striving, to be strong and firm in having done one's duty and then leaving it to Allah. 'Contentment is not just being aware of affliction, but not to object to Allah's ill.'

Socio-ethics - To respond to the needs of oneself and those of others with enthusiasm, self-exertion is the action which portrays shukr to the ne'ma of Allah.

## **AL-QADIR (ALL-POWERFUL)**

“Say! He is the All-Powerful.....” Suratul An’aam 6:65

Number Symbol **305**

Regular recitation strengthens the heart and gives a dynamic personality, when facing difficulty recite it for freedom from the difficulty, if recited during wudhoo whilst washing each limb – no enemy will be able to harm you.

Theo-ethics - To know that He alone possesses power – Power referring to the principle by means of which a thing comes into being according to a plan of will and knowledge where the ability is infinite. To know that it is Allah’s will alone that causes things to happen (being aware that in His hands is all goodness and evil cannot be attributed to Him). That everything/one is dependent upon Him. Not only creates all power but has total control over it.

Psycho-ethics - To display tranquillity in the heart, stability and constancy in behaviour by submission to His will.

Socio-ethics - Relating to others with kindness and respect and acting through a pre determined plan of knowledge and will fuelled by spiritual energy.

## **AL-'ADL (THE JUST)**

“And your Rabb is not unjust to anyone...” Suratul Kahf 18:49 – Number symbol **104**

If recited regularly, hidden events are made known, helps to make correct decisions. Recited regularly it helps to settle affairs favourably by the help of Allah.

The sifaat of Allah which completes Tawheed and gives meaning to Nabuwwa. Imama and Qiyama is Al-'Adl (THE JUST).

Theo-ethics No fault in creation; systematic and perfect symmetry in creation; Allah is for all His creation a just Master; He never does anything bad (kabeeh); He does not fail to do anything which is necessary; there is NO injustice in His decisions; when He gives an order or tests us; He does not ask beyond what we can do; He will always reward those who obey; It is for Him to decide if He so wishes to punish; Adhab will never go beyond what an individual deserves; Allah does not force anyone to do evil and then punish him/her.

If Allah did do something that was kabeeh (bad) and/or unjust then 4 possibilities arise:

1. That He did it knowingly which would make Him unjust (Dhalim).
2. That He did it unknowingly which would make Him ignorant (Jahil)
3. That He had been forced to do it which would make Him reliant on another/others (Mohtaaj)
4. That He did it out of jest or amusement which does not make Him Wise (Hakim). Since Allah is not Dhalim, Jahil, Mohtaaj or unwise, then the question of doing something unjust does not arise.

“At-tawheed an laa tatawahhamaa, wal 'adl an laa tattahumaa” – Tawheed is believing that He cannot be encompassed in imagination

and 'Adl is that there is no accusation towards Him. – Imam Ali (pbuh)

To understand 'adala we have to first look at events after the wafat of the Prophet (pbuh) – The Muslims came into contact with many other civilisations and philosophies – some which directly attacked Islam – a group of 'Ulema got together to discuss theology – Ilmul' Kalaam.

3 major groups arose – **Ash'aris** and Mu'tazalis. Ash'aris were the followers of Abul Hasan Al-Ash'ari who believed that 'Adl was not a reality but was relative (nisbati). He believed that whatever Allah does was 'Adl as opposed to Allah does what is 'Adl. In other words he believed that if Allah wished to send a mu'min to jahannam it was 'adl and if he wished to send an evil doer to Janna then that too was 'Adl. From this other questions emerged – Is something bad inherently bad (zhaati) or relatively good (nisbati)? – Is Insaan majboor (compelled ) or is he/she free?

Among his students some 'Ulema left in disagreement and were labelled **Mu'tazali** coming from the word 'tizaal meaning to abandon. Their leader was Wasil bin'Ataa . Their theory was that 'Adl was a reality and Allah acts according to 'Adl. Mu'tazalis teachings were very close to the school of Ahlulbayt. Politically the Ash'aris called themselves Ahlus Sunna wal Hadith for they said they relied on the Sunna of the Prophet (their interpretation) and gained ground for the mass psychologically accepted them. Mu'tazalis lost ground for their name suggested that they had abandoned the Sunna. At the time of these debates, it was the time of Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) – **the school of Ahlulbayt** - who first explained the concepts of absolute (zhaati) and relative (nisbati) dhulm (injustice) qadha (order) and qadar (measure).

In our school 'Adl has 2 meanings

- a) Balance and proportion maintained in creation (all schools of thought agree to this definition)

- b) Whatever Allah gives by His fadhil to those who deserve that much degree of fadhil (grace), nothing less. “What is the degree of ‘jabr’ (force) and ‘tafweezh’ (Freedom of choice)?” The question was asked to Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) Raise one leg and then another – he told the questioner who said he could not raise the other leg. Imam Said: That is the extent of freedom. Qadha is the capability of doing good or bad. Choice to go either way is one’s own.

“Is humankind free in their actions?” The question was addressed to Imam Musa ibn Ja’fer (pbuh) when he was a young child. He replied: There are only 3 possibilities

1. The human being is fully responsible for his/her actions
2. Allah is fully responsible for the human being’s actions
3. Both the human being and Allah are partners in the responsibility of actions. If Allah is the originator of the actions then there cannot be any question of punishment for sins and that would be unjust for Allah says : “..And your Rabb is not unjust to anyone..” Suratul Kahf 18:49 If both the human being and Allah are partners in sin than that too is gross injustice that the weaker partner is punished for an action committed together. So the only logical argument is that the human being acts according to his/her own ill.

The Umayyad dynasty justified all their actions declaring that Allah pre-determines all happenings and acts. E.g. Hajjaj ibn Yusuf (murderer of many Muslims) said when dying that ‘I did that which Allah had ordained’.

If good and evil are rational, then what about the god and evil that cannot be rationalised? 3 types of good and evil –

1. That which requires no evidence
2. That which require deliberation



3. That which is submission to Allah – the real meaning of Islam.

We must understand that sometimes we as human beings make our judgements, we base our thoughts on our relative thinking. The first cause is Allah (Illate Awwal). Every cause and effect from there on is a set divine symmetrical order. In this symmetrical order, there is nothing but goodness. He created the whole of creation as a package- He did not create piecemeal.

What we see as evil, bad, wrong or ills, it is because there is a disturbance in the horizontal earthly order. Evil is not an essence (jawhar) but an 'accident' (in the philosophical senses) – attribute which cannot exist without the essence- (aradh) e.g. colour, size, shape....e.g. Injustice is the absence of 'adl, sickness an absence of health, a shadow is the absence of light..... Who causes the absence of good? Allah in Suratur Room 30:41 says: "Fasaad (mischief) has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what humankind has done....." e.g. Anti-sickness drug – Thalidomide .....Allah will not interfere by changing His laws for His laws are set – "For never shall you find a change in the course of Allah, and never shall you find in the course of Allah any alteration....." Suratul Fatir 35:43

Human beings try to solve or understand evil by seeing it as an essence – e.g. Zorastrians believe that evil is an existence, Greek philosophers said evil as non-existence, the school of Ahlulbayt teaches us it is not an essence but an absence or cover up of the essence. Example of knifing someone – doer apprehended; not the manufacturer of knife. i.e. immediate cause apprehended, not the distant cause...

"At-tawheed an laa tatawahhamaa, wal 'adl an laa tattahumaa" – Tawheed is believing that He cannot be encompassed in imagination

and 'Adl is that there is no accusation towards Him. – Imam Ali (pbuh)

Within creation there is a diversity of colour, size, creed... The variation is created as a result of the laws of creation, it is not discrimination but variation for with Allah all, races, colours, sizes....are equal. "O People! We have created you from a male and female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may recognise each other; Indeed the most honoured with Allah is the one with taqwa" Suratul Hujurat 49:13

### **Qadha & Qadar**

**Qadar** is measure – there are both absolute measures and changeable measures – the laws of gravity is qadar, rizq is qadar (measures), umr (length of life) is qadar.

**Qadhaa** is order, judgement, destiny – it is dependant upon the interaction between qadar and the individual's capacity and action. Qadha is therefore the seal of qadar.

Psycho-ethics for Al-Adl – Self examination. Imam Ali Ridha (pbuh) has said: "Ibada (devotion to Allah) does not lie in lengthy fasting and salaa, but in the amount of contemplation in the works of Allah."

Socio-ethics for Al- Adl - To be just towards others is to fulfil their rights. "Indeed one mu'min has 30 rights over his/her mu'min from which there is no freedom except by fulfilment or forgiveness." Prophet (pbuh).

Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeem (pbuh) in 'Risalatul Huquq' (Charter of rights) states the rights of fellow Muslims as - " It is the right of your fellow Muslim in general to have peaceful feelings towards them and to spread the wings of mercy for them, to be gentle towards the wrong-doers among them and to reform them by earning their love;

to be grateful to those who are virtuous in character or are generous towards you - because their virtuosity of character...itself is a generosity towards you, as they have saved you from harm and spared you the effort of protecting yourself from them, and kept their troubles away from you. Therefore pray for all of them. And keep your help ready for all of them and treat all Muslims according to their proper position - keep the elder in the position of your father, the younger in the place of your child, and the contemporaries in the position of your brother....”

## **TAWHEED IN THAT NONE CAN ORDER OR FORBID EXCEPT HE**

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The third stage of TAWHEED is TAWHEED IN THAT NONE CAN ORDER OR FORBID EXCEPT HE.

Everything in this world is based on a precise calculation, logic and law. When we use an appliance.. etc.. We follow the instructions of the manufacturer to ensure it's well being and to be able to attain it's full potential. We will not follow the instructions of anyone else. Similarly, we are the creation of Allah – to accomplish our full potential, the Creator has provided us with a blueprint, a road map which illuminates all the winding dark paths of the world in the form of the Qur'an and the Ahlulbayt.

To sincerely believe that His orders are THE orders to follow develops the quality of taqwa in the human being. In Suratul Ma'ida 5:27, Allah says: "Indeed Allah accepts (only) from the muttaqeen (those with taqwa)

Taqwa is defined in most translations in English as 'piety' or 'God fearing' or 'God concious'. The basis of taqwa is the obedience of Allah with Ikhlas (sincerity).

Imam Ali (pbuh) says: Do not pretend to obey Allah; but obey him sincerely and faithfully. Let this desire of obedience be engraved in your mind and be deep rooted in your hearts. Let it rule over your words and deeds." **Sermon 203-Nahjul Balagha**

"..Lead your life as a muttaqi. Make taqwa a habit of your life. Wipe out your sins with its help. It will cure your moral diseases. Make it a means to provide for you His Grace and blessings. Take a lesson from those who have disregarded it and let not your life be a warning to those who want to understand how people without taqwa have fared in this world." **Imam Ali (pbuh) Sermon 196 - Nahjul Balagha**

Thus, one who has applied this stage of tawheed in his/her life demonstrates the quality of taqwa in his/her life – in other words one who fulfils all the wajibaat and keeps away from all the muharrimaat.

There are two types of fears. One is fear through ignorance and the other is fear through knowledge. e.g. When a child is afraid of going into a dark room alone his fear is through ignorance for it is his imagination which is **False Evidence Appearing Real**. When a toddler reaches out towards a snake slithering in front of him, and his mother rushes to save him for fear of him being bit, her fear is that of knowledge. Taqwa is fear of Allah through knowledge. The more we understand the Greatness of Allah and the more we observe and realise that there is none like Him; the greater the awe (respect, fear). However, this fear must be accompanied by hope. Hazrat Luqman, the wise told his son: "O my son! Have such fear of Allah, that when you come to Him with the good deeds of both the worlds, He would still punish you; and have such hope in Allah, that if you came to Him with the sins of both the worlds He would still have mercy for you." Imam Muhammad Baqir (pbuh) has said: "There is no mu'min who does not have two lights (beliefs) in his heart. The light of fear and the light of hope. Were one of these to be measured it would not exceed the other..."

### **Characteristics of Muttaqeen from Suratul Furqan 25:66-75.**

1. Their day time activities dominated by humility- they are HUMBLES.
2. When they are insulted by ignorance, they punish the insult with kindness.
3. At night they do use part of their night in submission (sajda & standing) to their Rabb.
4. They ask for the punishment of Jahannam to be kept away from them – they have a powerful vision of Jahannam.

5. When they spend, they are moderate, neither miserly nor extravagant.
6. They do not call upon, hope for from any other than ALLAH.
7. They respect the sanctity of life.
8. They do not commit adultery.
9. They do not witness falsehood.
10. When they pass by what is vain, they do not engage in it and walk away with dignity.
11. When exposed to the signs of their Rabb, they are attentive.
12. Their aspiration is to create a righteous family life.
13. They are in a constant state of healthy competition to be leaders of Muttaqeen..

Sermon 193 – Nahjul Balagha (Extracts) – Some qualities of Muttaqeen –

1. Speech to the point
2. Dress moderate
3. Walk is humble
4. Their attitude in trial and comfort is the same – dignified during calamities – patient in distress
5. They are prepared for death
6. Their needs are few – meals are small and simple – hopes simple
7. At night they recite Qur’an seeking through it a cure for their ailments – if they come across a verse on Janna, they incline towards it – if they come across a verse of Jahannam, they have a powerful vision of it – going into sajda to seek deliverance from it
8. They are not satisfied with their meagre good deeds
9. When they are praised, they say ;”I know myself better than others, and my Rabb knows me better than I know

myself” They pray “O Allah! ...Make me better than what they think of me and forgive me what they do not know”

10. He forgives those who are unjust to him – behaves well with those who behave badly with him
11. Does not feel happy with the misfortunes of others
12. If he laughs, he does not raise his voice.....

## **TAWHEED IN THAT NONE CAN GIVE BENEFIT OR DEPRIVE EXCEPT HE**

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The 4<sup>th</sup> stage of TAWHEED is TAWHEED IN THAT NONE CAN GIVE BENEFIT OR DEPRIVE EXCEPT HE.

The aim is to be aware that Allah is the sole and ultimate authority in both creation and legislation. Everything is the outcome of His creation and is held by Him. Nothing and no-one can benefit or deprive us unless Allah wills it. Allah has created the world according to a precise and specific scheme. "The sun, the moon and the stars are all at His command. Be aware that creation belongs only to God; it is His penetrating command that in its exalted purity creates the world and all it contains." Suratul A'raaf - 7:54

However, he Creator Who has assigned a particular effect to every factor and cause is able to neutralize and suspend that effect at any instant. Just as one command brought the order of the universe into existence, another command robs phenomena of their customary effect.

Suratul Ambiya 21:68-69 says: "They said, 'Burn him (Ibraheem) and help your gods, if you are going to do anything.' We commanded the fire, 'be a comfort and peace to Ibraheem'.

"Whatever Allah grants to human beings out of His Rahma, there is none to withhold it, and what He withholds there is none to send it forth after that, and He is the Mighty, the Wise." Suratul Fatir 35:2

Nothing and no-one can benefit or deprive us unless Allah wills it. Allah has created the world according to a precise and specific scheme. "Whatever Allah grants to human beings out of His Rahma, there is none to withhold it, and what He withholds there is none to



send it forth after that, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.” Suratul Fatir 35:2

We know that Allah is the Ultimate Cause. This is shown in two ways: **In creation:** Every cause begins from Him and ends up to Him; He is the first and final Cause. He is the real creator and Originator. All other causes are mere channels to carry His boundless mercy and limitless bounty to His creatures. **In Legislation:** He, in His mercy, established a contact with his creatures; He laid down the religion, sent down His commandments and prescribed suitable reward and appropriate punishment for His obedient and disobedient servants. He sent prophets to bring us good news and to warn us of the outcome ( punishment ) of breaking the laws. The prophets gave us His message in the best way possible. Where does Shafa’a (Intercession) fit in? Both the above aspects of causality of Allah may be, and in fact are, related to intercession.

## INTERCESSION

*Ash-shafa'ah* (intercession) is derived from “*ash-shaf*” which means “even” as opposed to odd. *Tawassul* means ‘to use as a means’, application, petition.....“ O you who believe seek an approach (medium) to Him... Suratul Maida -5:35

**Intercession in creation:** Quite obviously the intermediary / intervening causes of creation are the channels that bring the divine mercy, life, sustenance and other bounties to the creatures; and as such they are intercessors between the Creator and the created. Some Qur’anic verses are based on this very theme; “Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission...” Suratul Baqara - 2 : 255. “Surely your Lord is Allah; who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is firmly established on throne, regulating the affair; there is no intercessor except after His permission ...” Suratu Yunus -10:3

**Intercession in legislation:** Intercession, as analyzed earlier, is effective in this sphere too. It is in this context that Allah says: “On that day shall no intercession avail except of him whom the Beneficent god allows and whose word he is pleased with...” Suratu Taha –20:109 “... and intercession will not avail aught with Him save of him whom He permits” Suratu Saba 34;23 “...and how many angels there in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allah has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses...Suratun Najm53 :26

Intercession, in its true sense, belongs to Allah only; all His attributes are the channels through which His grace, mercy and decrees pass to the creatures. He is the real and all-encompassing intercessor: “Say: Allah’s is the intercession altogether” Suratu Zumar -39:44) Any other intercessors, other than Allah, get that right by His permission, by His authority.

1. Intercession in legislation and judgment can be divided into two: 1) Intercessors in this life 2) Intercessors in the here after

### **Intercessors in this life:**

- a) **Repentance** - “ O my servants! Who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful “ Suratuz Zumar39: 53
- b) **Eiman** – “O you who believe! fear Allah and believe in His Apostle: He will give you two portions of His mercy, & make for you a light with which you will walk, and forgive you” Suratul Hadeed 57:28.
- c) **Good deeds** - “Allah has promised those who believe and do good deeds ( that there is ) for them pardon and great recompense” Suratul Maida 5:9
- d) **The Qur’an** -‘Indeed has come to you from Allah a light and a manifest Book whereby Allah guides him who follows His pleasure , into the ways of peace, and takes them out from darkness towards the light by His will and guides them to the straight path” Suratl Maida -5:16
- e) **Anything related to a good deed** - It can be a mosque, holy places, holy shrines and auspicious days (Day of Arafaat , Lailatul Qadr, etc..... ).
- f) **The Ambiya and Mursaleen** - When they seek forgiveness for their people. Allah says: “” ...and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Apostle had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful” Suratun Nisa - 4:64
- g) **The angels** - They too ask for forgiveness for the believers. “....and the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth... Suratush Shura -42:5
- h) **The believers themselves** - A believing person may ask for forgiveness for his fellow believing brothers and for himself.

“...and pardon us, and forgive us, and have mercy on us, Thou art our Guardian...” (Suratul Baqara - 2:286)

### **Intercessors in the hereafter**

- a) **Ambiya and Mursaleen** –“And they say: “ The Beneficent God has taken to Himself a son. Glory be to Him. Nay! They are honored servants; they do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His commandment do they act. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves” Suratul Ambiya 21:26-28. Those who were called “son of God “ are in fact His honoured servants and they do intercede for him who He approves. Among them is ‘Isa , son of Maryam, and he was a prophet. It means that the prophets do intercede for approved persons.
- b) **Angels** – “And how many an angel is there in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allah has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses” Suratun Najm - 53:26
- c) **The Shuhada (Witnesses)** “And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for (or, do not own) intercession, but he who bears witness of truth and they know ( him ). Suratuz Zukhruf 43:86. This verse shows that those who bear witness of the truth do own (or have the authority for) intercession. **The believers** -They shall be joined to the witnesses on the Day of Judgment; it follows that they too may intercede like the witnesses. “And (as for) those who believe in Allah and His Apostles, these it is that are the truthful and the witnesses with their Lord.....” Suratul Hadeed -57 :19 .

## TAWHEED IN TRUSTING NONE BUT ALLAH

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The 5<sup>th</sup> stage of TAWHEED is TAWHEED IN TRUSTING NONE BUT ALLAH. “And put your trust in Allah, and Allah is sufficient as a protector” Suratul Ahzaab 33:3

“...And so Allah loves those who trust (Him). Suratu Aali Imran 3:159 Trust is the basis of faith. It not to be confused with childhood naivety or gullibility. It is a faculty that recognises truths that are infinitely incomprehensibly greater than ourselves.

Look at a child who believes a fairy tale to be true. As he grows older, he trusts less at face value because his faith is being obscured by reason and experiencing hypocrisy and being lied to. Soon he learns to even mistrust his inner beliefs. To protect himself, he begins to use reason alone to process ideas and establish a value system. In effect, he silences the inner voice within him – ‘haadi e batin’ – inner guide.

Tawakkul means entrusting all matters to Allah and relying upon His trusteeship. Trust in Allah means the severance of the abd of all hopes and expectations from others creations of Allah.” This is not to say that we can function on trust alone. Once we experience eiman through trust – reason becomes a tool to help us express the essence of Allah Trust is not passive – it does not mean sitting back and accepting events as they happen e.g. camel tied and then trust for safekeeping....

It means knowing that however much effort one invests, all blessings originate from Allah and ‘trusting’ that Allah always does what is good and right. True trust does not waver – even if things do not workout the way we like. It is not blind faith of ignorance – rather it is the uncompromising belief in the absolute truth. Trust in Allah is the purest expression of love for Him. Islamic history is full of incidents which illustrate that Allah is sufficient as a Protector only when one puts one’s total trust in Him. The Battle of Badr is one of the incidents where the Muslims had 313 poorly armed men

against a well equipped enemy army of 1000 men. Contrast this to the loss of trust in the Battle of Uhud by a few which led to defeat.

**Signs of mutawakkileen (Those who trust Allah)**

1. Fears and hopes on none but Allah (upholds the truth even in presence of those who are feared.
2. Never worries Because of confidence in Allah (in His hands is khayr) – heart is tranquil despite chaos around.
3. Does not become disturbed or does not panic in any situation.

## TAWHEED IN DEEDS ('AMAL)

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The sixth stage of Tawheed is Tawheed in deeds (amal) this means that in all our actions there should be no *riya'* or *suma'*. *Riya'* is doing something so as to be seen by others (showing off) and *Suma'* is doing something so that when people hear of it, they praise it. Tawheed in 'amal (deeds) means to only obey the Creator and serve His creation - All deeds must be towards these goals.....

Ask yourself the following questions every night: Is anybody happier because you passed his/her way? Does anyone remember that you spoke to him/her today? Can you say tonight, in parting with the day that's slipping fast, that you helped a single brother/sister of the many that you passed? Is a single heart rejoicing over what you did or said? Does the person who's hopes were fading now with courage look ahead? Did you leave a trail of kindness? As you close your eyes in slumber, do you think that Allah will say, "You have earned one more tomorrow by the work you did today?"

In Hadith e Qudsi, Allah says: "I am the best of partners" This means that if we were to do anything with a mixed *niyya* (partly for Allah and partly for someone else), He will give it all to the other person. Thus tawheed in 'amal is in a nutshell to revolve all actions around Allah.

## **TAWHEED IN TOTAL DEVOTION FOR NONE BUT ALLAH**

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The pinnacle of eiman for one who believes in tawheed is to be totally devoted to Allah.

In Suratu Aali Imran 3:31, Allah says: “Say, (O Muhammad) If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and will forgive your sins; Indeed Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”

The human being is programmed within his/her fitrat to love perfection. ‘fitrat is the basic consciousness which is common to us all. The source of the word ‘fitr’ in the ‘Arabic language is from ‘fatar’ which relates to a crack or break in the ground when a seed is germinated and a plant begins to grow out of the earth. If we allow ‘fitr’ to manifest itself it tells us clearly what is right and wrong. We are lovers of absolute perfection— He alone is absolute perfection. One in love sees nothing but his/her beloved – Why then do we not see Allah in everything when all creation does His tasbeeh?

“Whatever is in the heavens and the earth do the ‘subhaan’ of Allah...” Suratul Jumu’a - 62:1

How does one go about loving Allah?

Follow the footsteps of the Prophet (pbuh).

We see the effect of the love of Allah in those close to Him – e.g. Dua of Sayyida Aasiya in Qur’an, Dua Kumayl, Imam Ali’s search for shahada, Dua ‘Arafa, Munajaat of Imam Ali Zaynul ‘Aabedeem (pbuh)— “Ilaahiy! Who would want another in place of You after having tasted the sweetness of Your love?..... I ask from You love for You, love for those who love You, love for every amal (deed) which will bring me near You, and that You make Yourself more Beloved to me that anything other than You.....”



## TAWHEED

“The foremost in religion is the acknowledgement of Him,  
The perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify Him,  
The perfection of testifying Him is to believe in His Oneness.....”

**Nahjul Balagha – Serrmon 1**



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