### What must we know about Allah?

Allah – the Supreme Being of this universe – revealed the message of truth through the Quran to enable us to live meaningful lives and to help us succeed in the hereafter. Reflecting on that message with an open mind and heart has allowed many from mankind to recognize and believe in Allah as the sole deity of this universe. Once our minds clearly know Allah as our creator and sustainer, we can better understand Allah's rights over us and can also help us to worship Him the way we ought to worship Him as our creator.

### Allah's right over His servants

The prophet (S) said: "Allah's right over His servants is that they worship Him without associating any partner with Him in worship, and their right over Him is that He does not punish anyone who worships Him without associating any partner with Him in worship." [Sahîh al-Bukhârî and Sahîh Muslim]

### How Should we Worship Allah?

For us to worship Allah, we must, therefore, strive to learn about His rights over us. We can know more about Allah by properly understanding the concepts of Tawheed and to inculcate those principles in our hearts. The principles of Tawheed should never be taken lightly because they mark the boundaries of entering <a href="Islam">Islam</a>. Believing in those concepts brings one in the fold of Islam and denying them puts one out of Islam.

# Some of the highlights of the various aspects of Tawheed are listed below:

### Eeman (Faith) in Allah

*Eeman* (belief/faith) in Allah comprises of the following distinct concepts:

- 1. Faith (*Eeman*) in the Existence of Allah: This refers to believing in Allah not just any God but specifically Allah as the supreme being of this universe and all that exists in this universe.
- 2. Faith (*Eeman*) in the Rububiyah (Lordship) of Allah This refers to believing in Allah as the true Lord of this universe and as the controller of all aspects of this universe.
- 3. Faith (*Eeman*) in the Uluhiyyah (Worship) of Allah This refers to singling out only Allah as the One who is worthy of any worship.
- 4. Faith (*Eeman*) in al-Asma was-Sifat (the Names and Attributes) of Allah This refers to belief in Allah's names and attributes.

The following summarizes the above concepts.

## Faith in Allah's Existence

Allah proclaims His existence in the <u>Quran</u> by presenting multiple proofs and arguments, some of which are as follows:

- 1. Recognizing Allah's existence through the use of human intellect
- 2. Recognizing Allah's existence through ones fitrah (natural human instinct)
- 3. Proof through other (Divine) Religions (<u>Judaism and Christianity</u>)
- 1. Intellectual Proof for the Existence of Allah

The creation of this universe and the order held therein forces one to think about the originator of this miracle. On pondering, one realizes that this universe couldn't have started from nothing and the order with which it is held is a miracle in its own right. Even more astounding is the manner in which Allah assertively proclaims Himself in the <a href="Quran">Quran</a> as the originator of this creation and maintainer of this order. This eloquent description of the various aspects of this universe's creation can only be found in the Quran. Consider the following verses in the Quran:

"Were they created by nothing or were they themselves the creators?" [At-Tur 52: 35]

"It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They all float, each in an orbit." [Ya-Sin 36:40]

"This is the creation of Allah. So, show Me that which those (whom you worship) besides Him have created." [Luqman 31:11]

"Verily! Those whom you call upon besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even if they combine together for the purpose." [Al-Hajj 22:73]

The proclamation and confident assertion in these verses about Allah's creation of this universe gives credence to the deity and existence of Allah.

#### 2. The Fitrah (natural human instinct) proves the Existence of Allah

When faced with calamities, man has the instinct to call upon "God". This is because as humans we are created to be as such and most agree that a person's "self" calling upon a "supreme being" in extreme situations is part of man's nature. Allah reminds us in the Quran that this natural instinct (fitrah) of us calling upon Allah is part of Adam's creation. He says in the Quran:

"(Remember) when your Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed and made them testify as to themselves (saying), "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes! We testify." (Surah Al-A'raf:172)

"(Remember) Ayub (Job), when he cried to his Lord, "Verily, distress has seized me, and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy. So We answered his call. We removed the distress that was on him. We restored his family to him and the like thereof along with them as a mercy from Ourselves and a Reminder for all who worship Us." (Surah Al-Anbiya:83-84)

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِن ضُرٍّ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا وَذِكْرَى لِلْعَابِدِينَ

"Even Firawn (Pharaoh), who is famous for his pretence of denying the (existence of) Lord, was convinced about it inwardly. Allah says in the Quran about Firawn and his people:

"they belied them (those verses and signs) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their own selves were convinced thereof." (Surah An-Naml:14)

Again, not only we sense our instincts to call upon Allah in extreme situations, Allah's reminding us of this facet of our nature in the Quran is another proof of His existence and as our Creator.



#### 3. Proof through other (Divine) Religions (Judaism and Christianity)

Pondering over the Quran shows us how Allah refers to the earlier scriptures that He had revealed on the Jews and Christians and His message to them to now embrace Allah's words in the Quran. That's because Allah's message in earlier scriptures was changed. Consider what Allah says in the Quran: And (remember) when We gave Musa (Moses) the scripture [the Taurat (Torah)] and the criterion (of right and wrong) so that you may be guided aright." (Surah Al-Bagara:53)

### وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

O people of the scripture (Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah aught but the truth. The Messiah 'Îsa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His Word, ("Be!" – and he was) which He bestowed on Maryam (Mary) and a spirit (Ruh) created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Say not: "Three (trinity)!" Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allah is (the only) One llah (God), glory be to Him (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs. (Surah An-Nisa:171)

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لاَ تَغْلُواْ فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلاَ تَقُولُواْ عَلَى اللهِ إِلاَّ الْحَقِّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَي ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ فَآمِنُواْ بِاللهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلاَ تَقُولُواْ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ فَآمِنُواْ بِاللهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلاَ تَقُولُواْ

ثَلاَثَةٌ انتَهُواْ خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَات وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللهِ وَكِيلاً

O people of the scripture (Jews and Christians)! Now has come to you Our Messenger (Muhammad (S) making (things) clear unto you, after a break in (the series of) Messengers, lest you say: "There came unto us no bringer of glad tidings and no warner." But now has come unto you a bringer of glad tidings and a warner. And Allah is Able to do all things. (Surah Al-Maeda:19)

For those doubting Quran as the word of the God, Allah challenges mankind to read and ponder over its verses. Unfortunately, the critics of Quran are usually those who have neither pondered over the Quran nor try to understand its verses in the context in which they were revealed and addressed to mankind. As a result, they only see what their ignorance leads them to see. Allah challenges those people by asking them:

"Do they not then consider the Quran carefully? Had it been from other than Allah they would surely have found therein much contradictions." (Surah An-Nisa 4:82)

# Faith in the Oneness of Allah's Lordship

Allah has reminded us numerous times through the Quran that faith in His Lordship is one of the prerequisites to enter Islam. The meaning of *Rabb* (*Lord*) means (i) the Creator, (ii) the Owner, and (iii) the One in Control of all affairs. The Quran has numerous verses attesting to that fact. Again, along with pondering over the meaning of the verses, let us also observe the assertiveness and confident proclamation that attest to the deity of Allah. As an example, consider the following:

"The Originator of the heavens and the earth." (Surah Al-Bagarah:117)

"All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the (Only) Originator of the heavens and the earth." (Surah Fatir:1)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَلُمَدُ لِللَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَلَا اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Maalik of the Day of Recompense." (Surah al-Fatihah)

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

"He (Allah) arranges (every) affair from the heavens to the earth." (Surah Assaidah:5)

يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاء إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا يَدُبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاء إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا

We see the proof of His Lordship in our lives where we can sense His unseen presence in running the affairs of our lives and how He has attributed that power onto Himself through the various verses of the Quran. As humans, we know that our power is deficient and we possess limited control over our affairs. Allah reminds us in the Quran that He, as our sustainer, governs our affairs such as giving <a href="Life and death">Life and death</a>, causing sickness and providing cure, blessing His creation with richness and afflicting them with poverty, and so on.

# Faith in the Oneness of Allah's Worship

We should recognize that Tawheed Rububiyah by itself is not enough to admit one into the fold of Islam. Another important facet of our faith is therefore to also believe in the "oneness of Allah's worship." Allah reminds us in the Quran that even the *kuffar*, the *mushrikeen* and *iblees* affirmed the Lordship of Allah. Shaikh Salih al-Fawzan writes in Mujmal Aqeedah as-Salaf, that "...even Iblees (<u>Satan</u>), who is the head of Kufr said (as stated in the Quran),

"O my Lord! Because <u>you misled me</u>..." (Surah Al-Hijr:39)

"By Your Might, then I will surely mislead them all." (Surah As-Saad:82).

So, Iblees confessed the Lordship of Allah and took an oath by Allah's Might. Similarly, by reading history we come to know that while the disbelievers such as Abu Jahl, Abu

Lahab, and others confessed the Lordship of Allah, they did not believe in worshipping only Allah as the Lord of the universe. Allah says in the Quran:

"If you ask them who created them, they will surely say, 'Allah' (Surah Zukhruf:87)

The next step, therefore, after accepting and declaring Tawheed Rububiyah is establishment of Tawheed al-Uluhiyyah. This was the Message of all the Messengers. "Tawheed ar-Rububiyah necessitates Tawheed al-Uluhiyah i.e., once we have declared Tawheed ar-Rububiyah and affirmed that there is no Creator, Provider or Controller of the Universe except Allah, we need to proclaim Tawheed al-Uluhiyah – i.e., no one deserves any form of worship except Allah, none is to be invoked and sought help from except Allah, none is to be relied upon except Allah, none is to be offered sacrifices and avowed to except Allah and no worship is performed except for Allah alone.' Allah reminds us in the Quran:

"O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah) Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become pious. Who has made the earth a resting place for you and the sky as a canopy and sent down water (rain) from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshiped)." (Surah Al-Bagarah:21-22)

Allah thus ordered Tawheed al-Uluhiyah, which is His worship and He presented Tawheed ar-Rububiyah as a proof and reason for that. That is because we know that Allah created the sky and the earth and all that is between them; the blowing of the wind, sending down of the rain, the growing of the plants, the production of fruits which is the provision of the slaves. So it is not befitting for man to associate partners with Allah. Allah says in the Quran:

Say, 'In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything (i.e. treasures of each and everything)? And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, if

you know.' They will say, '(All that belongs) to Allah.' Say, 'How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth?" (Surah Al-Mu'minoon:88/89]

قُلْ مَن بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

سَيَقُولُونَ بِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ

"Such is Allah, your Lord! None deserves worship but He, the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone)." (Surah Al-An'aam:102)

Many <u>similar verses can be found in the Quran</u> where Allah has reminded us that He is the true ilah (the one who deserves to be worshipped) and that no one shares with Him this right (of being worshipped), be it an Angel or a Prophet. It is for this reason that Allah tells us that the call of all the <u>Prophets from the first of them to the last</u> of them was, "La ilaha illa Allah. (there is no ilah except Allah.)"

"Verily, We have sent among every nation, a Messenger (proclaiming), "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid Taghoot (false deities)-----." (Surah An-Nahl:36)

So, therefore, if someone believes in the existence of Allah and believes in the Rububiyah of Allah but worships others alongside Allah then he is not a believer in Allah until he singles out Allah in His Uluhiyyah.

"That is because Allah, He is the Truth and what they (the polytheist) invoke besides Him, it is Batil (false)." (Surah Al-Hajj:62)

It is therefore unfortunate to see many who have been misguided from Tawheed al-Uluhiyyah and returned to the Deen of the Mushrikeen by worshiping the graves and tombs, venerating saints and associating with them attributes of Lordship. Again, let's not forget that only Allah is worthy of worship and let's be wary of any acts directed to others that may take the form of worship.

To <u>translate the verse</u> "La Ilaha IllAllah" as "there is no god but God or Allah" is incorrect because it masks certain aspects of Tawheed. This is important because in the days of Jahilyaah, although people understood the meaning of "La Ilaha IllAllah" ("there is no god worthy of worship except Allah"), yet they took partners with Allah and called upon others than Allah, and accordingly sought help from others, made vows to other than Allah and so on. So, the closest translation and interpretation for "La Ilaha IllAllah" should be "there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah."

So, to summarize the concept of "Tawheed al-Uluhiyyah", let's not forget that as part of their beliefs, Muslims should believe what Allah has reminded the entire humanity, which is:

"Know, that indeed there is no god worthy of worship except Allah..." (<u>Surah</u> <u>Muhammad</u>:19

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ

## Faith in Names and Attributes of Allah

The fourth aspect of a Muslim faith is to believe in both the names and attributes of Allah.

Allah says in the Quran:

"(all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them,------" (Surah al-A'raf:180)

وَ لِلهِ الْأَسْمَاء الْحُسْنَى فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُواْ الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَآئِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ يَعْمَلُونَ يَعْمَلُونَ

Scholars have noted a notable difference between the <u>names and attributes</u> of Allah. The names of Allah refer to His essence. So, his names al-Qadeer (the Powerful), al-'Aleem (The All-Knowing), al-'Azeez (the Almighty), al-Hakeem (the Wise) – for example – all point to one Essence, which is the holy Essence of Allah. So we know that all the names agree in that they refer to the Essence of Allah. Even though they have different meanings, they are in agreement and are the same with regard to His Essence, different with regard to His Attributes." [

"The names and attributes of Allah, may He be exalted, are names in that they refer to His Essence and they are attributes with regard to the meanings contained in these words. In the first regard they are the same because they refer to one Essence, namely Allah, may He be exalted and glorified, and in the second regard they are different because each one has a different meaning.

So al-Hayy (the Ever-Living), al-'Aleem (the All-Knowing), al-Qadeer (the Powerful), as-Samee' (the All-Hearing), al-Baseer (the All-Seeing), ar-Rahmaan (the Most Merciful), ar-Raheem (the Most Compassionate), al-'Azeez (the Almighty), al-Hakeem (the All Wise) are all names of one named entity, who is Allah, may He be exalted, but the meaning of al-Hayy (the Ever-Living) is different from the meaning of al-'Aleem (the All-Knowing), and the meaning of al-'Aleem (the All-Knowing) is different from the meaning of al-Qadeer (the Powerful), and so on.

When we consider the names and attributes of Allah, we should be wary of not equating that to any of the attributes of the creation. In affirming the names and attributes of Allah, we should be wary of the two great prohibitions, which are (1) Tamtheel (resembling Allah to His creation), and (2) Takyeef (asking how the Names and Attributes are). These two prohibitions are proven by the text (of the <a href="Quran and the Sunnah">Quran and the Sunnah</a>) and also by the intellect. Allah says in the Quran:

"There is nothing like unto Him." (Surah ash-Shura:11) فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذْرَؤُكُمْ فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا يَذْرَؤُكُمْ فَاطِرُ السَّمِيعُ البَصِيرُ فَي البَصِيرُ البَصَالَ البَصِيرُ البَصَالَ البَصِيرُ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصِيرُ البَصَالَ البَصِيرُ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصْرِيرُ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَصَالَ البَرْقُولُ البَصَالُ البَصَالَ البَالْمُ الْعَالَ البَصَالَ البَالْمُ الْعَلَيْنَ الْعَالَ الْعَلَيْدُ الْعَلَيْنَ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ اللْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنُ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلِيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَيْنِ الْعَلَي

"So put not forward similitude for Allah." (<u>Surah an-Nahl</u>:74) فَلاَ تَصْرِبُواْ سِهِ الأَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ

"Do you know of any who is similar to Him?" (Surah Maryam:65)

The rational proof according to scholars is that the creator can never be like His creation and that the creation will be destroyed. As Allah says in the Quran:

"Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish. And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honor will abide forever." (Surah ar-Rahman: 26-27)

To conclude, let's remind ourselves that the Muslim faith requires affirmation of the existence of Allah as the God and supreme being of this universe, beliefs in the concepts of Tawheed Rububiyah (Lordship), Tawheed Uluhiyyah (Worship), and belief in Allah's names and attributes (al-Asmaa was-Sifaat).