

Guided by Divine Purpose

What Is This Life?
Why Are We Here?
What Is Our Role?
Who Must We Become?

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Preface

At some point in life, every thoughtful person is expected to grapple with questions such as: Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going? Yet, I suspect that billions of people on this planet may have never paused to seriously ask themselves these foundational questions. Many live and die without truly considering where they came from, why they were placed on this earth, and what awaits them beyond it.

Clarity in answering these questions is not a luxury, it is essential. It gives life meaning, provides a foundation for decision-making, helps us endure trials, directs our efforts toward what truly matters, and shields us from being consumed by distractions or trivial pursuits. Without this clarity, life can feel disjointed, superficial, or even meaningless.

In my personal search for answers, I found that these fundamental questions naturally gave rise to four deeper, more specific ones:

1. What is the purpose of our lives on earth?
2. What is the nature of this life on earth?
3. What is our role in fulfilling the purpose of our lives?
4. What traits and qualities must we develop to fulfill our role and achieve our purpose on earth?

Since neither humanity nor the universe had any choice, and since neither humanity nor the universe chose to exist, the answers to these questions cannot be found solely within human thought. They must come from the One who created us and willed us into existence, the Creator of the universe. It is only through a revelation from Him that we can understand His purpose for us, His expectations, and the path to fulfillment and success.

But a challenge arises: many people throughout history have claimed to possess divine revelation. Which of these revelations is authentic? How can we identify the true message from the Creator, the one that genuinely holds the answers we seek?

If we believe that the Creator possesses perfect knowledge and wisdom, then His revelation should be self-evident, recognizable with sincerity and minimal confusion. To begin, we must examine the major texts whose followers believe them to be divine in origin. There are four major scriptures, available in English and followed by more than 70% of the world's population:

- The Vedas, followed by Hindus
- The Old Testament (Torah), followed by Jews and Christians
- The New Testament, followed by Christians
- The Qur'an, followed by Muslims

In the first chapter of this book, I offer an approach to identifying the most authentic among these revelations, not through blind faith, but through reasoned exploration. Once this foundation is established, the subsequent chapters present the answers to our four essential questions, grounded in the guidance of the confirmed divine revelation.

Dr. Mamdouh M. Salama

Acknowledgement

I am deeply grateful to Allah for granting me the opportunity to contribute to the dissemination of His message. I owe a profound debt of gratitude to my parents for raising me as a Muslim, and to my wife and children for their unwavering encouragement, patience, and support.

This book is based on talks I delivered after the morning prayers at the Maryam Islamic Center in Sugar Land, Texas. I am sincerely thankful to the members of the Center for their encouragement and for providing me with the platform to make this humble contribution.

I also wish to acknowledge the many unnamed authors, scholars, and lecturers whose ideas and insights have influenced my reflections, even if I have not been able to cite them explicitly. However, the works of Dr. Mohammad Rateb Al-Nabulsi, particularly his Encyclopedia of the Beautiful Names of Allah, served as invaluable references for studying Allah's Names and Attributes. Above all, I am grateful to you, the reader, for engaging with this work and sharing it with others.

I pray to Allah, the Most Forgiving, to pardon any mistakes that may have inadvertently crept into this text, especially those related to the English translation of the Qur'an and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). May He accept this effort as a sincere act of service to His religion.

Important Notes to the Reader

1. Inclusivity of Address:

All subjects discussed in this book apply to both males and females. The pronoun “he” is used solely for linguistic convenience, avoiding repetitive usage of “he/she” or “his/her.”

2. The Proper Name of God:

The proper name of God, the Creator of the universe, is **Allah**. This term is not exclusive to Muslims; it is also used by Christians and Jews in the Arab world, even before the advent of Islam. For instance, the opening phrase of *Exodus* in the Arabic Bible reads:

“فِي الْبَدْءِ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ”

which translates to, “**In the beginning Allah created the heavens and the earth.**”

Unfortunately, English translations have replaced “Allah” with “God,” resulting in the phrase: “**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**”

3. Use of the Name “Allah”:

In this book, the name Allah will always be used when referring to mentions in the Qur’an or the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH). It will not be translated into “God.” The name “Allah” is preferred over “God” or “Lord” because Allah is genderless and has no plural form. When the pronoun “We” is used for Allah in the Qur’an, it signifies the majestic plural, denoting His supreme grandeur and power, while affirming His absolute oneness.

4. Translations of the Qur’an and Hadith:

Since the Qur’an was revealed in Arabic and the Prophet’s sayings were expressed in Arabic, any

English translation represents the translator's interpretation, which is inherently limited compared to the richness of the original language. This is why a single verse may appear differently in various translations. Allah's words carry layers of meaning, far beyond what one English word can convey. This is emphasized in the Qur'an:

- *"If all the trees on earth were pens, and the ocean (were ink), with seven more oceans replenishing it, the words of Allah would never be exhausted."* (Surah Luqman 31:27)
- *"Say, if the ocean were ink for (writing) the words of my Lord, the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were finished, even if We brought another like it as a supplement."* (Surah Al-Kahf 18:109)

5. **PBUH (Peace Be Upon Him):**

"PBUH" stands for "*Peace Be Upon Him*," a phrase of respect and reverence that is said upon mentioning the name of any Prophet.

6. **The Beautiful Names of Allah:**

Not all of the Glorious Names of Allah are analyzed in this edition of the book. Insha'Allah (God willing), the remaining Names will be discussed in future editions.

Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his noble companions.

This book is not merely an academic study of the Beautiful Names of Allah, nor is it a dry theological treatise on matters of creed. Rather, it is a heartfelt journey, intellectual, spiritual, and practical. guided by a longing to answer the most profound questions that have occupied the human soul since the dawn of time:

Why were we created? What is the true nature of this life? What is our role in it? And what qualities must we cultivate to fulfill that role and succeed in our mission?

At the heart of this journey lie four essential existential questions that every sincere seeker must confront:

1. What is the purpose of our life on earth?

Our purpose is to know Allah, love Him, worship Him alone without partner, and walk His path in pursuit of His pleasure — until we meet Him in joy and nearness in the Hereafter.

2. What is the true nature of this worldly life?

This life is a place of trial and cultivation, a short-lived passage, not a final destination. We live in it between blessings and tests, opportunities and challenges, until we return to our Creator bearing the harvest of our deeds.

3. What is our role in fulfilling this purpose?

We are the devoted servants of Allah and His vicegerents on earth. Our role is to uphold His guidance, spread goodness and justice, nurture ourselves and others, and strive to build a righteous and constructive society.

4. What traits and qualities must we develop to succeed in our mission?

We must adorn ourselves with the traits of true servitude: sincerity, patience, gratitude, humility, trust in Allah, hope in Him, love for Him and His creation, justice, and mercy.

These questions are not abstract reflections to be pondered and set aside. They are the compass guiding every chapter and every word of this book.

And because the clearest key to answering these questions lies in knowing Allah through His Names and Attributes, this book invites the reader to walk that illuminated path:

- With each of Allah's Names, we uncover a living answer, one that deepens our understanding of existence.
- With every reflection upon His Attributes, we find clarity about life's realities, our purpose within them, and the path to salvation in this world and the next.

When we understand that Allah is Al-Khaliq (The Creator), we realize that we are created with knowledge, wisdom, and purpose.

When we know that He is Al-Hakeem (The All-Wise), we learn to trust that every moment in our lives, even the painful ones, is infused with divine wisdom.

When we recognize Him as Al-Wadud (The Most Loving), our hearts overflow with love for Him, and we strive to reflect His mercy toward His creation.

And when we contemplate His Name Al-Aziz (The Almighty), we find sufficiency in His power, freeing ourselves from attachment to or dependence upon creation.

In every Name of Allah, there is light for the heart, clarity for the mind, and guidance for the soul.

This book is an invitation to rebuild our relationship with Allah upon the foundation of love, knowledge, and certainty. It teaches us that learning Allah's Beautiful Names is not an end in itself; it is a transformative path. It purifies the soul, refines the character, and draws us closer to the state of Ihsan, worshipping Allah as though we see Him.

Let this serve as a vital reminder:

To know Allah by His Names is not merely intellectual knowledge; it is nourishment for the heart, strength for the soul, a light in this world, and a bridge to the Hereafter.

The more we come to know Him, the more we love Him.

The more we love Him, the more earnestly we strive toward Him.

And whoever sincerely journeys to Allah, Allah will surely guide them to Himself.

We ask Allah, the Most High, to make this work sincerely for His Noble Face, beneficial to every reader, blessed in its reach, a means of bringing hearts closer to their Creator, and a key to understanding the purpose of our existence. He alone is capable of all things.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.
May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions.

The Author

Authentication of the Divine Reference

Since various groups claim different scriptures as the true word of God, the question arises: how can we identify the authentic revelation? If we are sincerely seeking a message from the Creator—who is defined by perfect knowledge and wisdom—His revelation should be clear, consistent, and recognizable through honest reflection and minimal effort.

The first step is to identify the most widely followed scriptures available in English:

- The Vedas (Hinduism)
- The Old Testament/Torah (Judaism and Christianity)
- The New Testament (Christianity)
- The Qur'an (Islam)

These four texts are followed by over 70% of the world's population.

To fairly and efficiently assess their authenticity, we can apply a simple, rational method—similar to how most people choose a book to study among many. They read the first page to understand the book's purpose and the last page to grasp the key message the author wants to leave with the reader.

This approach, free of bias and accessible to anyone with an internet connection, provides a reasonable starting point. The following table presents a comparison of the opening and closing passages of

these four scriptures, whose followers claim divine origin

The First Page

The Rig Veda	The Old Testament	The New Testament	The Quran
<p>1 I Laud Agni, the chosen Priest, God, minister of sacrifice, The hotar, lavishest of wealth.</p> <p>2 Worthy is Agni to be praised by living as by ancient seers. He shall bring hitherward the Gods.</p> <p>3 Through Agni man obtaineth wealth, yea, plenty waxing day by day, Most rich in heroes, glorious.</p> <p>4 Agni, the perfect sacrifice which thou encompassst about</p>	<p>1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.</p> <p>2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.</p> <p>3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.</p> <p>4 And God saw the light, that it was good:</p>	<p>1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.</p> <p>2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;</p> <p>3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;</p>	<p>1. In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful.</p> <p>2. Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.</p> <p>3. The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.</p> <p>4. Master of the Day of Judgment.</p> <p>5. It is You we worship, and upon You we call for help.</p> <p>6. Guide us to the straight path.</p> <p>7. The path of those You have blessed, not of those</p>

<p>Verily goeth to the Gods. 5 May Agni, sapient-minded Priest, truthful, most gloriously great, The God, come hither with the Gods. 6 Whatever blessing, Agni, thou wilt grant unto thy worshipper, That, Angiras, is indeed thy truth. 7 To thee, dispeller of the night, O Agni, day by day with prayer Bringing thee reverence, we come 8 Ruler of sacrifices, guard of Law eternal, radiant One, Increasing in thine own abode. 9 Be to us easy of approach,</p>	<p>and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters</p>	<p>4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; 5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; 6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; 7 And Solomon begat Roboam; and</p>	<p>against whom there is anger, nor of those who are misguided.</p> <p>In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful. 1. Alif, Lam, Meem. 2. This is the Book in which there is no doubt, a guide for the righteous. 3. Those who believe in the unseen, and perform the prayers, and give from what We have provided for them. 4. And those who believe in what was revealed to</p>
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<p>even as a father to his son: Agni, be with us for our weal.</p>	<p>which were above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.</p>	<p>Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; 8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; 9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; 10 And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;</p>	<p>you, and in what was revealed before you, and are certain of the Hereafter. 5. These are upon guidance from their Lord. These are the successful.</p>
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The Last Page

The Rig Veda	The Old Testament	The New Testament	The Quran
<p>1. VENOMOUS, slightly venomous, or venomous aquatic worm,— Both creatures, stinging, unobserved, with poison have infected me.</p> <p>2 Coming, it kills the unobserved; it kills them as it goes away, It kills them as it drives them off, and bruising bruises them to death.</p> <p>3 Sara grass, Darbha, Kuśara, and Sairya, Muñja, Vīraṇa, Where all these creatures</p>	<p>1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.</p> <p>2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.</p> <p>3 And ye shall tread</p>	<p>1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.</p> <p>2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.</p>	<p>In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful.</p> <p>1. Say, "He is God, the One.</p> <p>2. God, the Absolute.</p> <p>3. He begets not, nor was He begotten.</p> <p>4. And there is none comparable to Him."</p> <p>In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful.</p> <p>1. Say, "I take refuge with the Lord of Daybreak.</p> <p>2. From the evil of what He created.</p>

<p> dwell unseen, with poison have infected me. 4 The cows had settled in their stalls, the beasts of prey had sought their lairs, Extinguished were the lights of men, when things unseen infected me. 5 Or these, these reptiles, are observed, like lurking thieves at evening time. Seers of all, themselves unseen: be therefore very vigilant. 6 Heaven is your Sire, your Mother Earth, Soma your Brother, Aditi Your Sister: seeing all, unseen, keep still and </p>	<p> down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. 4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children </p>	<p> 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. </p>	<p> 3. And from the evil of the darkness as it gathers. 4. And from the evil of those who practice sorcery. 5. And from the evil of an envious when he envies.” In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful. 1. Say, “I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind. 2. The King of mankind. 3. The God of mankind. 4. From the evil of the sneaky whisperer. 5. Who whispers into the </p>
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<p>dwell ye happily.</p>	<p>to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.</p>	<p>6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.</p>	<p>hearts of people.</p>
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In comparing these four books, I concluded that only the Quran and the Old Testament appear to reflect divine revelation. The next step is to decide which of these two can be considered the most authentic divine

revelation to study in order to derive answers to the four questions.

To validate the divinity of these two books, I sought answers to the following six questions:

1. Does the book define its purpose?
2. Does the book state that its content was revealed by God?
3. Does the book state that it presents the revelations to a specific Messenger?
4. Is the person considered the Messenger well-known for his wisdom, reliability, and truthfulness?
5. Is the person responsible for documenting the revelation well-known for his wisdom, reliability, and truthfulness?
6. Is the version we have now an exact original?

In searching for the answers to these questions in both the Old Testament and the Quran, I noted that the Quran provided the answer to the first question on the first page, while it was difficult to find the answer in the Old Testament. The Quran states on its first page:

((ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)) البقرة: 2

"This is the Book; in it is guidance without doubt to those who are righteous" (Al-Baqarah 2:2).

The answers to the other questions were found on subsequent pages, but a particularly intriguing feature of the Quran is its inclusion of falsification tests for skeptics to validate its divine origin. These tests essentially state: If this book is not what it claims to be a divine revelation, then all you have to do is:

1. Find an error or a contradiction in it.
2. Find someone or a group of experts who can produce ten chapters like any of its chapters; when this challenge proved too difficult, Allah reduced the challenge to just one chapter.
3. Find another book that addresses all the subjects in the Quran and is as easy to understand, regardless of the reader's educational level.

These challenges are presented in the following verses:

((أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ
 اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا)) النساء: 82

"Do they not ponder on the Quran? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found in it a great deal of discrepancy." (Al-Nisa 4:82).

((أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِّثْلِهِ مَفْتَرِيْنَ وَادْعُوا مَنْ
 اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللَّهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِيْنَ (13) قَالِمٌ يَسْتَجِيبُوْا لَكُمْ
 فَاَعْلَمُوْا اَنْمَآ اَنْزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللَّهِ وَاَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ))
 هود: 14-13

"They may say "He made it all up. Say "then bring ten chapters made up like it; seek aid from anyone you like other than Allah if you are so truthful! "If they do not respond to you, then everyone should know that this Revelation is sent down with the knowledge of Allah and that there is no deity except Him. Will you not become Muslims?" (Hud 11:13-14)

((وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّمَّنْ مِثْلِهِ ۗ
وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (23) فَإِنْ لَّمْ
تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارُ هِيَ أَعَدَّتْ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ)) البقرة: 24-23

"And if you are in any doubt about what We have revealed to Our servant (Mohammad), then produce a chapter like it, and then call in your witnesses, besides Allah, if you are so truthful. If you do not and you will never do so, then heed the Fire whose fuel is Men and stones which is prepared for the disbelievers " (Al-Baqara 2:23-24).

((وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدْكِرٍ))
القمر: 17، 22، 32، 40

We made the Quran easy to learn. Is there anyone who wishes to learn? (Al-Qamar 54:17, 22, 32, 40)

Based on these straightforward analyses of the four books claimed to be divine, I concluded that the Quran is the only authentic divine revelation. Therefore, I will seek the answers to the four questions from it. I acknowledge that some might suggest I am biased by my upbringing as a Muslim. Thus, I encourage anyone who can justify another book as an authentic revelation to seek answers to the four questions from that book and publish their findings separately. Ultimately, the creator will judge us individually based on our sincerity in identifying and following His authentic revelation. At that time, no one will be there to defend us; each person will be accountable for their own decisions in this life.

The Purpose of Life

Having clarity regarding the purpose of our lives is extremely important because it gives our lives meaning, simplicity, focus, and motivation.

Understanding the purpose of our lives allows us to cope with difficulties, provides a foundation for making decisions, enables us to concentrate our efforts and energy on what is important, and helps us avoid being distracted by minor issues. Without knowing the purpose of our lives, life becomes trivial, confusing, and pointless.

It is unfortunate that most Muslims lack clarity regarding their purpose in life, and they often impose this same lack of clarity on their children from a young age by asking them self-centered questions like:

- What do you want to be?
- What should you do with your life?
- What are your goals and your dreams?

Focusing on ourselves will never reveal the purpose of our lives. To understand why we were placed on this planet, we must begin with the Creator, Allah.

We must recognize that our existence is not an accident. While our parents may not have planned us, Allah certainly did. If left to chance, the probability of any one of us existing is unimaginably low—far less than one in a trillion. Yet our creation was not random. Long before we were formed in our mothers' wombs, we were known and willed by Allah. He tells us that our souls were created long ago, during the time of Adam,

when He brought forth all of humanity from his loins and made them bear witness to His Lordship. Our existence, then, is not only deliberate, it is rooted in a divine plan that precedes time itself. Allah says in Surah Al-Araf:

((وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ))
الأعراف: 11

“We created you and shaped you, then We said to the angels: prostrate before Adam” (Al-Araf 7:11)

Also, in Surah Al-Araf, Allah presents another scene of our original birth as He says:

((وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَن تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ)) الأعراف: 172

“(Recall) when your Lord brought the descendants of the children of Adam (meaning you and I) from their loins and made them bear witness about themselves (by asking them) Am I not your Lord? They said: Yes, indeed, we bear witness.” (Al-Araf 7:172)

In Surah Al-Kahf, Allah describes a similar scene to that of the first creation when we will stand before Him again on the Day of Judgment, as He says:

((وَعَرِّضُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ صَفًّا لَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ بَلْ رَعِمْتُمْ أَلَّنْ نَجْعَلَ لَكُمْ مَوْعِدًا)) الكهف: 48

“And they will be presented lined-up before your Lord, (with the announcement), "Now you have come back to Us as We created you the first time; yet you thought We would not make any appointed time for you. “(Al-Kahf 18:48)

How we were brought to life from loins to stand in front of Allah and testify that He is our Lord is not the subject here, but what we need to know is that at that time, Allah had already prescribed every single detail about each one of us. He deliberately chose your race, the color of your skin, and every other feature of your body. Allah chose your parents with the right genetic makeup to custom make you. He also determined the natural talents you would possess and the uniqueness of your personality. He even created the world with great precision to be uniquely suited for your existence, to make your life possible.

Allah has a reason for everything, and because of that reason, He decided the exact time and place of your birth and your death, and He planned how long and where you would live on earth. Nothing in your life is arbitrary; it is all for a purpose. Allah did not create you because He was lonely; He created you because He has a purpose for you. Allah says in Surah Al-Mu'minun:

((أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ)) المؤمنون:

115

“Do you think We created you for nothing, and that you would not be returned to us.” (Al-Mu'minun 23:115)

So, when we ask what is the purpose of our lives on earth, the answer is to prepare ourselves for the eternal life when we return to the Creator. This point is emphasized in many verses in the Quran, as Allah

says that when we return to Him after our short stay on earth, He will ask:

((يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِنْكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي
وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا قَالُوا شَهِدْنَا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِنَا...)) الأنعام:
130

"O you assembly of Jinn and humankind, haven't you received Messengers from amongst yourselves who used to relate My verses to you, and used to warn you of the meeting of this Day?" They will say: "We testify against ourselves." (Al-Anaam 6:130)

The purpose of this life on earth is to prepare ourselves for this return, and this preparation is very important because while on earth we have many options, in the eternal life we will have only two: Heaven or Hell. The purpose of preparing for eternity should be far greater than our personal fulfillment and happiness. Being successful and fulfilling your life purpose are not the same. You could reach all your personal goals, becoming a raving success by the world's standards, and still miss the purpose for which you were created by Allah.

Life on earth is just a dress rehearsal before the real production. Just as the nine months you spent in your mother's womb were not the end in themselves but preparation for your life, this life is a preparation for the next. Tragically, many people will have to endure eternity without the company of Allah because they chose to live without Him on Earth.

While a person's life on earth seems long, it is actually extremely short when compared to a single day in the hereafter, as Allah says:

((وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ)) الحج: 47

“Verily a day with your Lord is like a thousand years from what you count (on Earth).” (Al-Hajj 22:47)

Allah emphasizes this point in many places in the Quran, as He says:

((كَانَتْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبُثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِنْ نَهَارٍ))
الأحقاف: 35

“On the Day when they see what had been promised them, they will realize that their life on Earth has only been a mere one hour of day. (Al-Ahqaf 46:35)

The purpose of your life on earth is to prepare for eternity. Recognizing that you live on earth in the light of eternity will make your values noble, your use of time and money wiser, and you will place a higher premium on character instead of wealth and fame. Living in the light of eternity will make many of your problems appear trivial.

To make the most of your life, you must keep the vision of eternity continuously in your mind and the value of it in your heart. If you have this vision, you will never fear death because you will know that death is not the end of life, but it is the birthday into an eternal life. While our brains cannot fully comprehend the wonders and greatness of heaven, Allah has given us glimpses of eternity in the Quran in words that we can understand.

The Nature of this Life

The way we perceive our life shapes its trajectory. If you ask someone how they envision their life, they will likely use a metaphor, and this metaphor influences their life more profoundly than they might realize. For example:

1. If someone views life as a party, their primary value is having fun.
2. If someone sees life as a race, they value speed and are often in a hurry.
3. If someone sees life as a marathon, they value endurance.
4. If someone sees life as a battle, winning is their main focus.

For Muslims, the Quran provides three metaphors that reflect eternal truths about life. These metaphors should form the foundation of our lives and help us understand the world around us. The three metaphors are:

1. Life is a temporary assignment
2. Life is a test
3. Life is a trust

Life is a Temporary Assignment

The Quran teaches that our time on Earth is brief and transient. After we leave this world, it will seem as if we were here for only a fraction of an hour. Allah says:

((وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَن لَّمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنَ النَّهَارِ)) يونس: 45
“The day He will gather them together (on the Day of Judgement): They will feel as if they had not stayed (on earth) any longer than an hour of a day:” (Yunus 10:45)

((وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ)) الروم:

55

“On the Day when the Hour (The Day of Judgement) will take place, the transgressors will swear that they did not remain (in the grave) more than one hour.” (Al-Rom 30:55)

((وَ لِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا أَمُرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)) النحل: 77

“To Allah belongs the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. And the Decision of the Hour (of Judgment) is no more than twinkling of the eye, or even quicker: for Allah has power over all things.” (Al-Nahl 16:77)

((يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَلُهَا (42) فِيمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا (43) إِلَى رَبِّكَ مُنْتَهَاهَا (44) إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ مَّن يَخْشَاهَا (45) كَانَتْهُمْ يَوْمَ يُرَوَّنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا)) النازعات: 42-46

“They ask you about the Hour (Day of Judgement), when will it take place. (42) Who are you to tell

them, (43) With Your Lord is the final word about it.
(44) You are only a Warner for anyone who fears it.
(45) The day they will see it, it will seem to them as if they did not live (in this world) but only for an evening, or a fraction of midday.” (Al-Naziat 79:42-46)

Compared to eternity, our life is incredibly short. One day with Allah is like a thousand years on Earth:

((وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ)) الحج: 47

“Verily a day with your Lord is like a thousand years from what you count (on Earth).” (Al-Hajj 22:47)

Even if you live for 100 years, it is equivalent to about two hours in the context of eternity.

We must recognize that Earth is a temporary residence, and we are travelers on our way to our true home in Heaven. True believers understand that they are citizens of Heaven and are here to prove their worthiness to return to where they were created.

Allah, in His mercy, allows us to experience discomfort and dissatisfaction to prevent us from becoming too attached to Earth. While we may have happy moments, we will never feel completely satisfied here.

Life is a Test

The metaphor that life is a test is emphasized in many verses of the Quran and is demonstrated through the challenging tests faced by Allah's Prophets. Allah tested all His Prophets, including Ibrahim, Jacob, Lot, Yusuf, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad.

Allah continually tests our character, faith, obedience, integrity, and love. Terms like testing, trials, temptations, and refining appear frequently in the Quran. These tests develop and reveal our character. Allah watches our response to both blessings and difficulties, observing how we handle power, happiness, health, and wealth, as well as problems, conflicts, illness, and disappointments.

The Quran makes it clear that we will be tested:

((أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ (2) وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ..)) العنكبوت: 2-3

“Do people think that they will be left alone on saying, "We believe," and that they will not be tested? (2) Indeed, We have tested those before them, so Allah can affirm who the truthful are and who the liars are.” (Al-Ankabout 29:2-3)

Allah also says:

((كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذٰئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَنَبَلُّوْكُمْ بِالسَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ)) الأنبياء: 35

“Everyone has to taste death: and We test you with misfortune and with blessing by way of trial. To Allah you must return.” (Al-Anbiaa 21:35)

While we do not know when or how we will be tested, we can predict the nature of some tests from the Quran and learn how to respond. Allah says in Surah Al-Baqara:

((وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ
وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِيرِ الصَّابِرِينَ (155) الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا
لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ (156) أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ.)) البقرة: 157-155

"We will surely test you with some fear and hunger, and some loss in wealth, lives and the fruits of your labor. But give glad tidings to those who are patient. (155) Who say when misfortune strikes them: We belong to Allah and to Him is our return. (156) Those are the ones upon whom Allah grants blessing and mercy, and they are the rightly guided." (Al-Baqara 2:155-157).

Tests can range from minor inconveniences to overwhelming challenges, but all have eternal implications. Understanding life as a test helps us see that every moment is an opportunity to build our character, strengthen our faith, and demonstrate our reliance on Allah. Allah wants us to pass these tests and will not test us beyond our capabilities:

((وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ يَنْطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا
يُظْلَمُونَ)) المؤمنون: 62

“We do not place a burden on anyone except according to his ability and with Us there is a book which speaks with truth, and they (the people) will never be wronged.” (Al-Mu’minun 23:62)

Allah also revealed:

((لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ))
البقرة: 286

“Allah does not place a burden on anyone beyond his capacity. For him is what he has earned, and on him what he has incurred.” (Al-Baqara 2: 286)

Every time you pass a test, you build up the chest of your treasure in eternity. This is what the Prophet taught us; whether we are tested with misfortunes or fortunes, our success in passing the test depends on our level of acceptance and the nature of our reaction to them. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن صهيب قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ لَهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَتْ خَيْرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ صَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَتْ خَيْرًا لَهُ".
رواه مُسْلِمٌ.

“I wonder about the state of the believer, all his matters are good, and this state is for none but the believer. If he receives a blessing, he is grateful to Allah, and this is good for him and if misfortune inflicts him, he is patience and that is good for him,” (Muslim)

Allah also makes another point clear: when we look at things, we must have full trust that Allah is in control,

and He wants what is good for us. What appears to be evil may later prove to be extremely good. As Allah says:

((فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَبَجَعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا)) النساء: 19

"It may be that you hate something in which Allah has placed a great deal of good" (Al-Nisaa 4:19).

The Prophet (PBUH) recommended that we read Surah al-Kahf (The Cave) every Friday. In this surah, there is a story about the meeting between Prophet Musa (Moses) and the righteous man, Al-Khidr. Al-Khidr did three things to which Prophet Musa objected. Prophet Musa interpreted two of them as evil acts and one as a foolish act. The two actions Prophet Musa interpreted as evil and destructive were damaging the ship of the poor fishermen and killing a child. However, when Al-Khidr explained the reasons for his actions, it became clear that what appeared to be evil were, in fact, great blessings for those impacted by them. In this case, Al-Khidr was in a unique position because Allah had revealed to him knowledge of the future that Prophet Musa did not know.

There should be no doubt in our minds that the presence of evil in the world does not negate the perfection of Allah's actions. The real question is how do we react to evil? Apparent evil represents a test for those whom Allah granted the power to cause evil, those who are afflicted by it, and those who witness it. The question is not why Allah allows it; the issue is what you are doing about it. If you see evil in the world and stand idle complaining about it, you have failed the

test. The Prophet (PBUH) taught us three ways to remove evil in his famous hadith:

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه قال : سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : " من رأى منكم منكرا فليغيره بيده ، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه ، فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه ، وذلك أضعف الإيمان " (رواه مسلم)

**"Whoever sees an evil must correct it with his hand, if he cannot then by his tongue, if he cannot, then by his heart and this is the weakest of faith".
(Muslim)**

If you cannot do anything about evil, you should at least reject it with your heart and not support those who are committing it.

For those on whom evil is inflicted, it is also a test regarding how they respond when they gain the power to repel it. Their response should not be driven by revenge and hatred but by justice and mercy. Allah says:

((وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ..)) فصلت: 34

"Good and evil are not equal. Repel (evil) with what is best, then he between whom and you there was enmity will become a close friend" (Fussilat 41:34)

Life is a Trust

Allah offered us the responsibility of life on Earth as a trust, which we accepted:

((إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا))

الأحزاب: 72

"We offered the trust to the Heavens and the Earth, and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it, but man accepted it. He has been grossly unfair (to himself) and ignorant." (Al-Ahzab 33:72).

It is our ignorance and unfairness to ourselves that prevent us from recognizing and utilizing the powers Allah has given us to fulfill this trust. Allah appointed us as His vicegerents on Earth:

((وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً)) البقرة:

30

"And when your Lord told the angels: I am placing a vicegerent (Khalifa) in the earth. (Al-Baqara 2: 30)

Allah has provided all the resources we need and granted us energy, intelligence, opportunities, and relationships to fulfill this trust. The concept of stewardship begins with the recognition that Allah is the Owner of everything and everyone in the universe. Everything we have is a loan to us, existing before we arrived and continuing after we leave.

Our role is to manage and care for Allah's creation. The air, water, land, animals, birds, and everything on Earth are entrusted to us for use and care. Health, wealth, authority, and intellectual capacity are gifts from Allah placed in our trust.

By understanding these metaphors, Muslims can navigate life with a clear sense of purpose and direction, rooted in the eternal truths of the Quran.

It is only through our injustice to ourselves and ignorance of our capacities and responsibilities that we can squander Allah's gifts, becoming heedless and losing our way, stumbling through life.

At the end of your time on Earth, you will be evaluated and rewarded based on how well you managed the trust Allah placed under your control. This means that everything you do, even simple daily chores, has eternal implications. Allah emphasizes this by saying that we will be questioned about every blessing on the Day of Judgment:

((ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ)) التكاثر: 8

“Surely, you will be asked about the blessings (that you were given).” (Al-Takathur 102:8)

The Prophet (PBUH) reinforced this by saying:

عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ “لَا تَزُولُ قَدَمُ
ابْنِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّهِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ خَمْسٍ عَنْ عُمْرِهِ
فِيهِمْ أَفْنَاهُ وَعَنْ شَبَابِهِ فِيهِمْ أَبْلَاهُ وَمَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ وَفِيهِمْ أَنْفَقَهُ
وَمَاذَا عَمِلَ فِيهَا عَلِمَ” (رواه الترمذي)

“On the Day of Resurrection, the son of Adam will not be dismissed from (the court of) his Lord until he is asked about five issues: His life and how he lived it. His youth and how he used it. His wealth and how he earned it. His Wealth how he spent it. His knowledge and how he acted upon it.” (Al-Tirmidhi)

The Means to Achieve the Purpose of Life - Worship

The third question is: What is our role on earth to fulfill the purpose of our lives? The answer is revealed by Allah in Surah Az-Zariyat. Allah says:

((وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (56) مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ (57) إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ))
الذاريات: 56-58

And I (Allah) did not create the jinn and humans except that they worship Me. (56) I do not want any provision from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. (57) In fact, Allah is the provider of provisions, Possessor of the Power, the Strong.” (Al-Zariat 51:56-58).

These verses clearly indicate that the primary way for humans to achieve their purpose on earth is to worship Allah. However, the term "worship" is a traditional English translation of the Arabic word revealed by Allah, which is "Ya'abudoon" (يعبدون). There are significant differences between these two words, and thus further elaboration is necessary before discussing the key elements of this command, its quality metrics, and the potential barriers to achieving it.

Definitions of the English term “To Worship” and the Arabic Term “Ya’abud”

The English term "worship" is derived from two words: "worth" and "-ship." "Worth" means "significant, valuable, of value; appreciated, highly thought-of,

deserving, meriting; honorable, noble, of high rank." The suffix "-ship" means "quality, condition; act, power, skill, position; relation between." Therefore, "worship" is used to mean "an act of affirming God's worth." This term first recorded around the year 1300, signifies an act of expressing reverence, respect, admiration, and devotion to God through religious practices and rituals.

The Arabic verb "Ya'abud" (يعبد) and its plural form "Ya'abudoon" (يعبدون), as used in the Quran, are derived from the Arabic root "Abad" (عبد), meaning "to be a slave." The relationship between the master and the slave is called "Ubudiyyah" (عبودية) ("slavery"). The actions of the slave towards his master are called "Ibadah" (عبادة), which involves complete obedience and total submission. The person performing "Ibadah" (عبادة) is called "Abd" (عبد) ("slave"). Thus, a common Arabic name is "Abdallah" (عبدالله), meaning "slave of Allah."

Note In the West, it is often thought that Abdallah is solely a Muslim name, which is incorrect. The name Abdallah existed in the Middle East long before Islam and is also used by Christians. The first phrase in Genesis in the Arabic Bible reads: "فِي الْبَدْءِ خَلَقَ اللهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ" ("In the beginning Allah created the heavens and the earth"). Unfortunately, English translators replaced "Allah" with "God," so it reads: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

In the Quran, Allah uses two different plurals for the title "Abd" (عبد) ("slave"). Allah uses the common plural "Abeed" (عبيد) (slaves) five times and another plural "Ibad" (عباد) (slaves) ninety-seven times. The plural "Abeed" (عبيد) is used when addressing disbelievers,

while "Ibad" (عباد) is used when addressing believers.
For example:

((وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ (181) ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْت أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ
اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ)) آل عمران: 181-182

**“We shall say: Taste the punishment of fire! (181)
This is due to what your hands sent ahead. Allah
never do injustice to (His) slaves (Abeed).” (Al-
Emran 3:181-182)**

((وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ)) البقرة: 186

**“When My slaves (Ibad) ask you about Me, I am
near. I respond to the call of every suppliant when
he calls Me; so, they should respond to Me and
believe in Me; so that they may be on the right
path.” (Al-Baqarah 2: 186)**

One must recognize that the term "worship" falls short in explaining Allah's command that the role of humans on earth is to be steadfast in their Ibadah (عبادة) of Allah. The term "Ibadah" establishes the foundational relationship between humans and Allah, the Master of the universe and everything that exists. This divine Master-slave relationship is entirely different from the human master-slave relationship.

Confusion arises when people fail to differentiate between these two relationships. In a human master-slave relationship, the master benefits from the slaves' labor. However, in the divine Master-slave relationship, Allah benefits nothing from His slaves; rather, He provides for them and ensures their happiness and

survival. Allah summarizes this relationship in the following revelation:

((يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمْ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَمِيدُ (15) إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُدْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ (16) وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ))
فاطر: 17-15

“O mankind, you are the ones who need Allah. And Allah is Free-of-All Needs, the Ever-Praised. (15) If He will, He can be do away with you rid of you and bring new creation. (16) That is not something difficult for Allah.” (Fatir 35:15-17)

This point is further emphasized in a Hadith Qudsi where the Prophet (PBUH) said that Allah, the Almighty, said:

عن أبي ذر الغفاري رضي الله عنه ، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما يرويه عن ربه عز وجل أنه قال : (يا عبادي إني حرمت الظلم على نفسي ، وجعلته بينكم محرما فلا تظالموا ، يا عبادي كلكم ضال إلا من هديته ، فاستهدوني أهدكم ، يا عبادي كلكم جائع إلا من أطعمته ، فاستطعموني أطعمكم ، يا عبادي كلكم عار إلا من كسوته ، فاستكسوني أكسكم ، يا عبادي إنكم تخطئون بالليل والنهار ، وأنا أغفر الذنوب جميعا فاستغفروني أغفر لكم ، يا عبادي إنكم لن تبلغوا ضري فتضروني ، ولن تبلغوا نفعي فتنفعوني ، يا عبادي لو أن أولكم وآخركم وإنسكم وجنكم كانوا على أتقى قلب رجل واحد منكم ما زاد ذلك في ملكي شيئا ، يا عبادي لو أن أولكم وآخركم وإنسكم وجنكم قاموا في صعيد واحد فسألوني ، فأعطيت كل واحد مسألته ما نقص ذلك مما عندي إلا كما ينقص المخيط إذا أدخل البحر ، يا عبادي إنما هي أعمالكم أحصيها لكم ثم أوفيكم إياها ، فمن وجد خيرا فليحمد الله ، ومن وجد غير ذلك فلا يلومن إلا نفسه) رواه مسلم .

"O My slaves, I have made oppression forbidden for Myself, and I have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another.

O My slaves, all of you are misguided except those whom I guide, so seek guidance from Me and I shall guide you.

O My slaves, all of you are hungry except those whom I feed, so ask Me for food and I shall feed you.

O My slaves, all of you are naked except those whom I clothe, so ask Me for clothes and I shall clothe you.

O My slaves, you commit sins by night and by day and I forgive all sins, so ask Me for forgiveness and I shall forgive you.

O My slaves, you can neither do Me any harm nor can you do Me any good.

O My slaves, if the first and the last amongst you and all humans and Jinns were all as pious as the most pious heart of any individual amongst you, that would add nothing to My power and dominion.

O My slaves, if the first and the last amongst you and all humans and Jinns were all as wicked as the most wicked heart of any individual amongst you, it would cause no loss to My power and dominion.

O My slaves, if the first and the last amongst you and all humans and Jinn were all to stand together in one place and ask of Me, and I were to give everyone what he requested, then that would not decrease what I possess, except what is decreased of the sea when a needle is dipped into it.

O My slaves, it is only your deeds that you will be held accountable for, then I shall recompense you for it. So, anyone finds good, let him praise Allah, and anyone finds other than that, let him blame no one but himself."
(Reported by Muslim)

Allah's Everlasting Vigilance and Our Role as His slaves

Allah never sleeps and is always vigilant to support and protect us, His slaves. When we sleep, He ensures that all our bodily functions operate properly, preventing us from dying. Imagine how long any of us would survive if we had to control our heart, blood circulation, respiratory system, etc. Allah guarantees our survival by controlling the air we breathe, the sun that provides light and warmth, the water we drink, and the food we eat.

Since Allah does everything for us and needs nothing from us, why does He want us to serve Him as our sole Master on earth? The answer is that Allah wants us to always feel dignified and liberated, preventing any other human from taking advantage of us by making us their slaves.

It seems to be human nature to either dominate or be subservient. This belief led many philosophers and Christian theologians to justify slavery. The Greek philosopher Aristotle suggested that slavery was natural, with human beings falling into two categories: slaves and non-slaves. Similarly, Plato argued that justice consists of the superior ruling over and having more than the inferior.

Contrary to these views, Allah dignified all people and liberated them from any feelings of inferiority towards others by declaring that all people are His slaves, and He is the only Master in the universe. However, since life is a test, equality of mankind in this life is not the goal; the goal is to ensure equity in the Hereafter.

- Equality means everyone is given the same resources or opportunities.
- Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Allah creates people with different talents and capabilities, granting them varying levels of fortunes and blessings. These differences are intended to ensure the continuation of worldly life. Allah says:

((أَهْمُ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ)) الزخرف: 32

“Is it they who allocate the Mercy of your Lord? We have allocated among them their livelihood in the worldly life and raised some of them above others in rank that some of them may employ others in their work; and the mercy (Paradise) of your Lord is better than (the wealth) that they accumulate.”
(Al-Zukhruf 43:32)

An interesting reality that many overlook is that if Allah gave everyone everything they wanted, transgression and mischief would occur. Allah says:

((وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ يُنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ)) الشورى: 27

“If Allah were to expand the provision for His slaves (to its full extent), they would spread mischief on earth; but He sends down what He

wills in due measure: Surely, with regard to His slaves, He is All-Aware, Ever- Watchful.” (Al Shura 42:27)

You may wonder how expanding provisions causes the spread of mischief while the general perception is that restriction causes mischief. A well-known experiment by John Calhoun, an American ethologist and behavioral researcher, called "Universe 25: The Mouse Utopia," demonstrated that major disasters result from providing provisions to everyone. The experiment, conducted between 1968 and 1970, concluded that tension, stress, and needs are necessary for survival because they give life true meaning.

Whether a person is a king or a servant, an owner or a worker, a man or a woman, they are all slaves of Allah. Their role is to realize their relationship with Him and act accordingly. No one should ever use the blessings Allah granted them to feel superior over others. The differences among people are not matters of superiority or inferiority but rather roles to ensure a self-sufficient society. A doctor has no superiority over a janitor because both are essential for each other's survival; both are servants of the One Master, Allah. The only superiority metric Allah considers is righteousness. Allah says:

((يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ))
الحجرات: 13

“O mankind! We have created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other.

Verily the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most righteous. And Allah is All-Knowing, All Aware.’ (Al-Hujuraat 49:13)

On the Day of Judgment, only the purity of the heart will matter. Allah say:

((يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ * إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ))
الشعراء: 88-89

“The Day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any benefit (88) Except to him who will come to Allah with a sound heart.” (Al-Shuara 26:88-89)

The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized this point by saying that the metric of superiority is righteousness:

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: " لا فضل لعربي على أعجمي، ولا لأبيض على أسود، ولا لأسود على أبيض إلا بالتقوى " (رواه أحمد وغيره.)

"O people! There is no preference for Arabs over non-Arabs, nor for non-Arabs over Arabs. Neither for white over black people, nor for black over white people. Preference is only through righteousness."

The title “slave of Allah” is the most honorable title any person can have and thus Allah used it to refer to His most beloved, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), by declaring him as “His slave” (عبده). Allah says:

((سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَنَّا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ وَمِنْ آيَاتِنَا أَنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ)) (الإسراء: 1)

“Glorious is He Who made His slave (Muhammad) travel by night from the sacred Masjid to Al-Aqsa

Masjid whose neighborhood is blessed, so that We let him see some of Our signs. Surely, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.’ (Al-Isra 17:1)

((اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيۡ اَنْزَلَ عَلٰى عَبْدِهٖ الْكِتٰبَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ وِعُوْجًا..))
الكهف: 1

“All praise belongs to Allah Who has sent down to His slave (Mohammad) the Book (the Qur'an) and allowed no crookedness in it.” (Al-Kahf 18:1)

((تَبٰرَكَ الَّذِيۡ نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقٰنَ عَلٰى عَبْدِهٖۙ لِيَكُوْنَ لِلْعٰلَمِيْنَ نَذِيْرًا))
الفرقان: 1

“Blessed is He Who has revealed His Criterion to His slave (Muhammad), (of right and wrong), that he may be a warner to the people” (Al-Furqan 25:1)

((وَاِنَّهٗۙ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللّٰهِ يَدْعُوْهُ كَادُوْا يَكُوْنُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا..)) الجن:
19

“And when the slave of Allah (Muhammad) stood up in prayer to Him (Allah), they almost rushed on him in crowds.” (Al-Jinn 72:19)

While the word "worship" does not fully capture the comprehensive meaning of "Ibadah" (our relationship with Allah), I will use "worship" for simplicity.

In the following sections, three aspects of worship will be discussed:

1. The Key Elements of Worship.
2. The Quality Metrics for Proper Worship.
3. The Barriers to Proper Worship.

The Key Elements of Worship

It is critical to define worship in terms of what Allah, as our sole Master, is expecting from us, as His slaves, and this is total obedience to His commands and that our obedience is to be motivated by our love and gratitude to Him and by our trust in Him that all His commands are intended for our benefits. Therefore, we can define Worship as any act that demonstrates the four elements:

1. Obedience
2. Love
3. Gratitude
4. Trust.

This definition is consistent with the opinion of other scholars. As example, Imam Ibn Taymiya defined worship as: "It is a comprehensive term that encompasses all what Allah loves of words and deeds whether inward or outward". Also, Imam Ibn al-Qayim said: "Worship is the utmost degree of love to Allah while accompanied by complete surrender".

1. Obedience of Allah:

The essence of worship is obedience because it affirms the fundamental relationship between us as slaves and Allah as the sole Master. While Allah, Our Master, does not gain any benefit from anything we do including our obedience to His commands, He is not interested in stale forms of obedience whether they are insincere praise, or mechanical rituals. He is also not interested in half-hearted commitment and partial

obedience. Allah gave us emotions, so we could perform our acts of obedience with deep and genuine feelings, not faked ones. Full obedience to Allah means that you should fulfill all His commands wholeheartedly, joyfully and with enthusiasm. Allah condemns those who fulfill commands without enthusiasm and considers them as the hypocrites, as He said:

((وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى)) النساء: 142

“And when they stand for prayers, they stand unenthusiastically.” (Al-Nisaa 4:142)

Our understanding of obedience extends far beyond the prescribed rituals (i.e., prayers, fasting, reading the Quran, and Hajj). These rituals are important to purify our soul to help us withstand all temptations and thus perfect all our acts of worship in accordance with Allah’s commands. The concept that worship covers all aspects of the person’s life is emphasized with the declaration that Allah commanded us to say:

((قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)) الأنعام

162:

“Say: "My prayer, my sacrifice, my life and my death, are for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.” (Al-Anaam 6:162)

Therefore, believers are in a state of obedience to Allah all the time. However, full obedience to Allah requires full surrender to Him. Surrender means that you obey Allah’s command, even if you do not understand the wisdom behind it. When you surrender to Allah, you will not surrender to anyone or anything

else; nothing is more powerful and liberating than surrendering your life to Allah.

However, surrendering to Allah is not passive resignation, fatalism, or an excuse for laziness; it is not accepting the status quo. Surrendering does not mean giving up rational thinking, Allah does not want you to waste the mind He gave you to serve Him. Surrendering is not repressing and stifling your personality.

The Quran gives us many examples of the obedience that Allah expects and commends. The most compelling are those of Prophet Ibrahim'. He obeyed Allah's command to leave his infant and only son, Ismael, with his wife, Hajar, alone in the arid desert of Mecca. Then, later when Ismael grew up and became an impressive youth, Prophet Ibrahim was commanded to sacrifice him. He proceeded with the process of sacrificing him. Also, the reaction of the young son, Ishmael, is another example of obedience. He accepted Allah's commands when he was informed by his father of it. The scene is presented to us by Allah in the following verse:

((فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَى قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ)) الصافات: 102

"Then, when (the son, Ismael) reached the age at which he could work with him, he (Ibrahim) said: "O my son! I have seen in my sleep that I am slaughtering you, consider it, what is your opinion?" (The son) said: "O my father! do as you are commanded: you will find me, if Allah wills, one of those who are patient." (Al-Safat 37:102)

Full obedience means that you should do everything exactly as Allah has commanded, exactly the way He described it and at the exact time He specified without delays or procrastination. Full obedience means that you obey without objections or reservations and without asking for clarification. Allah does not owe us any explanation. Understanding can wait, but obedience cannot. Allah Says:

((وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا...))
الأحزاب: 36

“It is not befitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have a choice about the matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has gone astray falling into a clear error.” (Al-Ahزاب 33:36)

((فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا)) النساء: 65

“By your Lord, they will not believe, until they make you the judge in all the disputes between them and then find no discomfort in their souls against what you have decided and surrender to it in total submission.” (Al-Nisaa 4:65)

Partial obedience by selectively following certain commands while ignoring others is not true obedience. Allah gives a serious warning to those who engage in this behavior:

((أَفْتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ
ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى أَسْفَدٍ
الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ...)) البقرة: 85

"Do you believe in part of the scripture and disbelieve in others? The reward for those who do so is shame in this life and the most grievous doom in the hereafter. For Allah is not unaware of what you do" (Al-Baqarah 2:85).

Obedience to Allah's commands extends far beyond performing rituals; it includes all acts of charity, business dealings, and our responses to difficulties and challenges. Allah says:

((لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ
آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى
حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي
الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا
وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالصَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ..)) البقرة: 177

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East or the West; but it is righteousness to believe in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, and the Prophets. And to spend of your wealth in spite of love for it to your kin, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves. And to be steadfast in prayer and give the Zakat (charity). And to fulfill the contracts that they have made. And to be firm and patient, in pain and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, and they are the righteous". (Al-Baqarah 2:177)

A crucial aspect of obedience is glorifying Allah and declaring His praise. The Arabic term for this is "Tasbeeh," which appears in the Quran over 80 times. Allah says:

((يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا (٤١) وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً
وَأَصِيلًا)) الأحزاب: 41-42

“O you who believe, Remember Allah with much remembrance; (41) And glorify Him morning and evening.” (Al-Azab 33:41-42)

((فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّن السَّجِدِينَ (٩٨) وَأَعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّى
يَأْتِيكَ الْيَقِينُ)) الحجر: 98-99

“So, glorify the praises of your Lord and be among those who prostrate themselves (before Him). (98) And worship your Lord until comes to you the certainty (death). “ (Al-Hajr 15:98-99)

To truly fulfill this command and glorify Allah with certainty and conviction, one must study His creations, a point emphasized in many Quranic verses. Thus, studying all forms of science is a key element of obedience to Allah. Allah not only praises those who study His creations but also attributes disbelief to those who do not appreciate them. Allah says:

((أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)) الأنبياء: 30

“Did the disbelievers not see that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then We parted them and We made from water every living thing. Would they still not believe?” (Al-Anbiya 21:30)

((إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ))
 البقرة: 164

“Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that sail in the sea carrying what benefits mankind, and in the water Allah sends down from the sky reviving with it the earth after it was dead; and in every creations He has scattered on it (earth), and in the movements of the winds and the cloud subjected for service between heaven and earth, are signs for those who have understanding. ” (Al-Baqarah 2:164)

((إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ)) آل عمران: 190

Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day are signs for those who have intellect. (Al-Emran 3:190)

Studying the universe and all its creations is required not only to foster awe of Allah but also to utilize these creations to fulfill our role on earth as Allah’s vicegerents. Another important element of glorifying Allah is living in harmony with all other creations that constantly glorify Him, even if we do not understand their language. Allah says:

((تَسْبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا
يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا))
الإسراء: 44

“The seven heavens and the earth, and all beings therein, declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His praise; but you do not understand how they declare His glory! Surely, He is Oft Forbearing, Most Forgiving!” (Al-Isra 17:44)

((سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.))
الحديد: 1

“Whatever is in the heavens and on Earth, declares the Praises and Glory of Allah: for He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.” (Al-Hadeed 57:1; Al-Hashir 59:1; Al-Saaf 61:1)

This life is a trust, and a key element of demonstrating our obedience to Allah involves effectively using our unique talents and abilities. Perfecting any profession that creates value for mankind is an act of worship, as it fulfills the trust that Allah granted us. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

قال النبي ﷺ: “إن الله يحب إذا عمل أحدكم عملاً أن يتقنه”.
(أخرجه أبو يعلى والطبراني، عن عائشة رضي الله عنها)

“Allah loves that when one of you does something to perfect it.”

This point is further emphasized by the Prophet (PBUH) when asked about Ihsan (perfection and excellence), he said:

“الإحسان أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك”

“Ihsan (perfection/excellence) is to worship Allah as if you see Him and if you don’t see Him, you should know that He sees you.”

Thus, perfecting any beneficial work is an act of obedience to Allah. Regarding preferred professions, scholars have different opinions. Some favor agricultural professions, citing the Prophet’s saying:

ما من مسلم يغرس غرسا أو يزرع زرعاً فيأكل منه طير أو إنسان أو
”بهيمة إلا كان له به صدقة“

“No Muslim will ever plant a tree or cultivate a crop that feed a man, a bird or an animal except it will be recorded for him as a charity.”

Others advocate for industrial professions, supported by the Prophet’s hadith:

”ما أكل أحد طعاماً قط خيراً من أن يأكل من عمل يده، وإن نبي الله
داود عليه السلام كان يأكل من عمل يده“

“The best food one can eat is the one paid for by the person’s labor; Prophet David used to eat from what his hands earned.” (We know that Prophet David was a steel maker.)

Those favoring commercial professions quote the Prophet’s hadith:

”التاجر الصدوق يحشر مع النبيين والصدّيقين والشهداء“
“The honest merchant will be resurrected with the Prophets, the truly faithful and the martyrs.”

Scholars conclude that there is no absolute preference among professions; value is based on societal needs and addressing existing shortages.

Obedience to Allah demonstrates true love for Him and secures His blessings and love, as He said:

((وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا))
النساء: 69

“Those who obey Allah, and the Messenger are with those whom Allah has blessed, namely the Prophets, the truly faithful, the martyrs and the righteous, and how excellent they are as companions.” (Al-Nisa 4:69)

((قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (31) قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ)) آل عمران: 31-32

“Say: "If you really love Allah then follow me and Allah will love you and forgive for you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (31) Say: "Obey Allah and the Messenger. But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers” (Al-Emran 3: 31-32)

2. Love of Allah:

Love of Allah is essential for full obedience. Fear might secure some obedience but never full obedience. All of Allah’s commands are for our benefit because He loves us, and our love for Him should be natural and expected. For those who rebel against Allah’s commands, He will easily replace them with others whom He loves and who love Him:

((يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ)) المائدة: 54

“O you who believe, if anyone from you repel from his faith, Allah will bring a people whom He loves and who love Him.” (Al-Maeda 5:54)

This verse shows that Allah’s love for us precedes our love for Him. Therefore, our love for Allah should surpass our love for anything else. Allah says:

((قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ)) التوبة: 24

“Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses, and your clan; and the wealth you have earned; the business you are afraid to decline; and the homes you like are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way - then wait until Allah comes with His command. Allah does not guide the rebellious.” (Al-Tawba 9:24)

Allah contrasts believers with others by saying:

((وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ - وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ)) البقرة: 165

“Among the people there are some who take others besides Allah, they love them like the love due to Allah, but those of believe are most firm in their love for Allah.” (Al-Baqarah 2:165)

Love is not merely an emotional feeling; it is a commitment demonstrated by actions. While our love for Allah is shown through our commitment to obey

Him, His love for us is shown through His extensive support and continuous guidance. In the famous hadith Qudsi, Allah says:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - : إن الله قال : "من عادى لي وليا فقد آذنته بالحرب ، وما تقرب إلي عبدي بشيء أحب إلي مما افترضت عليه ، وما يزال عبدي يتقرب إلي بالنوافل حتى أحبه ، فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به ، وبصره الذي يبصر به ، ويده التي يبطش بها ، ورجله التي يمشي بها ، وإن سألني لأعطينه ، ولئن استعاذني لأعيذنه " (رواه البخاري .

“Whosoever shows enmity to my Wali (one whom I am His guardian), I will declare war against him. My slave does not draw nearer to me by anything more than what I made obligatory upon him. And my slave continues to draw closer to me with “Nawafel” (supererogatory) deeds until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing that he hears with; his sight that he sees with, his hand that he grips with, his foot that he walks with and if he asks Me I’ll give him and if he seeks my refuge, I will protect him, and I do not hesitate about anything I am doing as much as I hesitate to take his soul because I know he hates death and I hate to hurt him.”

Imam ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah offered ten recommendations that result in Allah’s love for you and your love for Him:

1. Reciting the Qur’an while reflecting on its meanings.
2. Performing voluntary deeds in addition to obligatory ones.

3. Engaging in voluntary prayers during the last portion of the night and concluding with repentance and seeking forgiveness.
4. Remembering Allah in all circumstances, with your tongue, heart, and actions.
5. Prioritizing what Allah loves over what you love.
6. Keeping your heart aware of Allah's Names and Attributes.
7. Observing and acknowledging Allah's blessings, whether obvious or hidden.
8. Having a heart that is soft, subdued, and humble before Allah.
9. Keeping the company of sincere and knowledgeable believers, benefiting from their most fruitful knowledge.
10. Avoiding anything that comes between Allah and your heart.

Your love for Allah is demonstrated by your reaction when facing difficulties.

True love means that when you encounter any problem, pain, sickness, or misfortune, you acknowledge it as a manifestation of Allah's love, helping you fulfill His purpose in your life, and you are content with it. Only through true love for Allah will you experience peace, freedom, and His power in your life.

We demonstrate our love for Allah through our praise of Him and repentance for our shortcomings. Knowing that Allah sees, hears, and records everything we do, our love for Him should strongly motivate us to avoid anything displeasing to Him. However, Allah understands our weaknesses and has instituted

repentance to allow us to erase our embarrassing actions.

Repentance is like a software tool that allows you to edit your life's video by removing your sins. Granting us this ability is a clear manifestation of Allah's love, as He does not want to embarrass us on the Day of Judgment. Our love for Him is demonstrated by using repentance because we do not want to be embarrassed before Him.

The following verse from Surat Al-Tawba reveals Allah's love by accepting our repentance even before we make it:

((ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ)) التوبة: 118

He accepted their repentance, so that they may repent. Surely Allah is the Most-Relenting, the Most Merciful. (Al-Tawba 9:118)

This blessing of repentance, which Allah committed to accept from all human beings, is critical because the lack of its clarity in other religions caused major confusion. With the ability to cleanse one's soul by repenting for one's sins, the concept of original sin becomes irrelevant, eliminating the need for human sacrifice or incarnation to purify the human soul. Prophet Adam, like any other human, had his sin erased by his own repentance:

((فَتَلَقَىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ))

البقرة: 37

“Then Adam received from his Lord Words (to repent using them). And his Lord accepted his repentance. No doubt, He (Allah) is the Most-Relenting, the Most Merciful.” (Al-Baqara 2:37)

Regarding those who commit major sins, Allah says:

((يُضْعَفُ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدُ فِيهِ مُهَانًا (٦٩) إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا)) الفرقان: 69-70

“The punishment will be doubles from him on the day of Judgment and he will remain there in agony forever. (69) except the one who repents, believes, and does good deeds, then Allah will replace his evil deeds with good ones and Allah is Most-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Al-Furqan 25:69-70)

3. Gratitude to Allah

Expressing our gratitude and thanks to Allah is a crucial element of worship. The first phrase in the Quran is: (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ) **“All Thanks and Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the world”**.

Throughout his life, the Prophet (PBUH) expressed his thanks to Allah and encouraged his companions to always be thankful. He advised them:

مُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَخَذَ بِيَدِهِ وَقَالَ: أَوْصِيكَ يَا مُعَاذُ، لَا تَدْعَنَّ فِي دُبُرِ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ تَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْيِي عَلَيَّ ذِكْرَكَ وَشُكْرَكَ وَحُسْنَ عِبَادَتِكَ « (رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ وَصَحَّحَهُ ابْنُ حُرَيْمَةَ.)

“After each prayer, don’t leave until you say: “O Allah help me to always be in a state of your remembrance, your thanks, and the perfection of my Worship.

Offering continuous praise and thanks to Allah fills our hearts with joy and increases His blessings, as He said:

((وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ)) إبراهيم: 7

“Your Lord has decreed, if you express your gratitude, I shall certainly give you more (more blessings).” (Ibrahim 14:7)

Therefore, expressing gratitude to Allah benefits us, as expressed by Luqman:

((وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ)) لقمان: 12

“We gave wisdom on Luqman: "Be grateful to Allah", and whoever is grateful, his gratitude is for his own self; but if any is ungrateful, indeed Allah is free of all needs, worthy of all praise”. (Luqman 31:12)

Gratitude to Allah is expressed not only through words but also through actions. Allah says:

((أَعْمَلُوا ءَالَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرِينَ)) سبأ: 13

"O family of David, work for expressing thanks! but few of My slaves are grateful!" (Saba 34:13)

In this verse, Allah commands the family of David to express their gratitude through actions that may involve the following five aspects:

1. Attributing blessings to Allah, the provider.
2. Using blessings in obedience to Allah and according to His commandments.
3. Not allowing blessings to distract from Allah.

4. Not using blessings to act superior or arrogant towards others.
5. Thanking and praising Allah for His blessings.

An important form of expressing gratitude is not squandering the gifts, resources, and opportunities granted by Allah. Use them for the benefit of all. Allah intentionally gifted us differently so that we complement each other. He watches how we apply our abilities, whether we use them properly or waste them. Fully using one's abilities is essential for a strong society, as the Prophet (PBUH) illustrated:

عن أبي موسى الأشعري رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "المؤمن للمؤمن كالبنيان يشدُّ بعضه بعضاً، ثُمَّ شَبَّكَ بين أصابعه" (رواه البخاري)

"A believer to another believer is as a structure in which each part supports the other parts."

A person who does not fully apply their knowledge and talents creates a weakness in society's structure, leading to its potential collapse. Thus, society's survival depends on each person fully utilizing their abilities. This is supported by the Prophet's saying:

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال "إن الله يحب إذا عمل أحدكم عملاً أن يتقنه". (أخرجه أبو يعلى والطبراني)

"Indeed, Allah loves that whoever is assigned a task must perform it with perfection."

4. Trust in Allah

Complete trust in Allah: Having complete trust in Allah means having faith that He knows what is best for you. There should be no doubt that He will assist you in times of trouble and will never burden you with more than you can bear. We demonstrate our trust in Allah through our reactions to misfortunes. Allah has instructed every Muslim on what to say when facing hardships:

((قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ)) التوبة: 51

"Say, nothing will ever happen to us except what Allah has prescribed for us. He is our protector and on Allah alone the believers should put their trust" (Al-Tawba 9:51).

(Note: The Quranic phrase "Katab Allah Lana" means "what Allah prescribed for us," not "Katab Allah Alaina," meaning "what Allah prescribed upon us").

We must fully trust that whatever Allah prescribes is for our own good, no matter how adverse it may seem. Allah has emphasized this in several verses, such as:

((فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا)) النساء: 19

"It may be that you dislike something in which Allah has placed a great deal of good" (Al-Nisaa 4:19).

We also need to trust that Allah knows what is better for us than we do ourselves. Allah says:

((وَعَسَى أَنْ تَحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ))
البقرة: 216

**"It is possible that love something, which is bad for you. But Allah knows, and you do not know."
(Al-Baqarah 2:216)**

Believing that any setback and hardship is ultimately for our good allows us to face them with patience, rather than grief. This perspective towards misfortune is unique to believers. Allah says:

((وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ
وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ (155) الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا
لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ (156) أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْنَا صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ)) البقرة: 155-157

"We will surely test you with some fear and hunger, and some loss in wealth, lives and the fruits of your labor. But give glad tidings to those who are patient. (155) Who say when misfortune strikes them: We belong to Allah and to Him is our return. (156) Those are the ones upon whom Allah grants blessing and mercy, and they are the rightly guided." (Al-Baqarah 2:155-157).

The Prophet (PBUH) directed Muslims to respond to any misfortune by saying:

ثبت عن النبي ﷺ أنه قال: "ما من عبد يصاب بمصيبة فيقول: إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون، اللهم أجرني في مصيبتى، وأخلف لي خيراً منها؛ إلا أجره الله في مصيبتته، وأخلف له خيراً منها."

"Verily, we belong to Allah and verily, unto Him shall we return. O Allah! Reward me for the calamity that has befallen me and grant me better than what I lost."

Money as a Test of Trust in Allah

One of the tests Allah has instituted to evaluate our trust in Him is money. For many, money is the greatest test of all. It is said that you cannot serve both God and money, and your heart will follow whatever you treasure. Allah made money a key test for every Muslim by making it the third pillar of Islam (zakat). How you manage your worldly wealth directly reflects your spiritual wealth. A time will come when we regret the missed opportunities to spend money on charity, but then it will be too late. Allah reminds us:

((وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ))
المنافقون: 10

“Spend from what We have provided you before death comes to one of you and he would say: ‘My Lord, if You would only delay things for me for a short time, then I will give charity and become one of the doers of good.’” (Al-Munafeqoun 63:10)

When an opportunity arises to give to charity and you withhold, it will be to your loss. Allah says:

((هَآأَنْتُمْ هَآؤَلَاءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يَبْخَلُ وَمَن يَبْخَلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخَلْ عَن نَّفْسِهِ ؕ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ))
محمد: 38

“Here you are being invited to spend in the way of Allah, among you are some who are miser. But anyone who is miser, his miserliness is only at the expense of himself. Allah is rich, and you are poor.” (Mohammad 47:38)

Allah has warned us about Satan's trickery, using the fear of poverty to make us fail in demonstrating our trust in Allah. Allah said:

((الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ)) البقرة: 268

"Satan threatens you with poverty and bids you to commit indecency. But Allah promises you His forgiveness and bounties and Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." (Al-Baqarah 2: 268)

Knowing that Satan will use the fear of poverty, Allah emphasizes His promise of goodness and prosperity in this life and the hereafter for those who spend in charity for Allah's sake. Allah says:

((وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (١٣٣) الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ)) آل عمران: 133-134

"Hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and for a garden that expands the heavens and the earth prepared for the righteous (133) Those who spend (in cause of Allah) in prosperity and in adversity." (Al-Imran 3:133-134)

The money we spend is an investment with a huge return. Allah says:

((مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَتَتْ سَنَابِلَ سَبْعِ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِّائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضْعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ)) البقرة: 261

"The parable of those who spend their money in the way of Allah is that of a grain that produces seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He pleases; and Allah is All-Embracing and All-Knowing, "(2:261).

If you withhold because your needs are barely met, Allah addresses your concern by advising you not to be miserly but to be righteous and to place full trust in Him. Allah says:

((وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا (٢) وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ)) (الطلاق: 2-3)

"Whoever has Taqwa of Allah, He will grant him a way-out (2) and will provide for him from sources that he never anticipated." (Al-Talaq 65:2-3)

You will surely be provided with wealth from unexpected sources if you trust Allah and spend in charity. After all, you are spending the money Allah has entrusted you with, and the resources from which your wealth comes will never run out. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن أبي كبشة عمرو بن سعد الأنماري رضي الله عنه أنه سمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "ثلاثة أقسم عليهن وأحدنكم حديثاً فاحفظوه: ما نقص مال عبد من صدقة، ولا ظلم عبد مظلمة صبر عليها إلا زاده الله عزاً، ولا فتح عبد باب مسألة إلا فتح الله عليه باب فقر،" (رواه الترمذی)

"Three things, I swear by Allah for them, and I am going to tell you about them, so you should remember them well: (1) The wealth of a slave will not diminish by charity, (2) Allah increases in honor the slave who endures injustice patiently. and (3) the person who opens a gate of begging, Allah opens for him a gate of poverty. (Tirmidhi)

The Quality Metrics for Proper Worship

Proper worship must fulfill two essential requirements: sincerity and accuracy. Therefore, it necessitates engaging both our hearts and minds.

1. Sincerity:

Worship must be sincere and genuine. It is not just about saying the right words but truly meaning them. Insincere and heartless praises of Allah are worthless. Allah demands our sincere worship, pure for Him alone. He says:

((قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ * وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَكُونَ أَوَّلَ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ)) الزمر: 11-12

Say: "Verily, I am commanded to worship Allah with sincere devotion exclusive for Him; (11) "And I am commanded to be the first of those who submit." (Al-Zumur 39:11-12)

Allah looks past our words to see the attitude of our hearts. While humans judge by outward appearance, Allah judges by inward feelings and thoughts.

The Prophet (PBUH) pointed to the heart and said: (التقوى ها هنا) **"righteousness is here, righteous is here."**

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

عن أبي هريرة - رضي الله عنه - قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إن الله لا ينظر إلى أجسادكم ولا إلى صوركم ولكن ينظر إلى قلوبكم" (رواه مسلم).

“Verily, Allah does not look at your appearance or wealth, but rather He looks at your hearts.”
(Reported by Muslim)

Allah also teaches us that without a pure and sound heart, all we do is in vain. He says regarding the condition for success on the Day of Judgment:

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ (٨٨) إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ﴾
الشعراء: 89-88

“At that day neither wealth nor progeny shall be of benefit, except one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.” (26:88-89)

2. Accuracy

Your worship must be as Allah commanded, not as you wish. We cannot create our own comfortable forms of worship; they must be guided by the commands in the Quran and the Sunnah of His messenger (PBUH). Scholars have stated that ritualistic acts of worship must follow the Prophet's (PBUH) example. Anything else is forbidden as misguided innovation (bidaa). Hence, knowledge is crucial.

Islam prioritizes seeking knowledge before actions and deeds. In his Book of Knowledge (كتاب العلم), Imam Bukhari (البخاري) begins with a chapter titled "The chapter of Knowledge before words and deeds" (باب العلم قبل القول والعمل لِقَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى). Knowledge guides actions; without it, actions are prone to error. Only through knowledge can a person discern truth from falsehood, right from wrong, and halal from haram. Allah elevates those with knowledge, saying:

((يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)) المجادلة:11

“Allah raises in ranks those of you who believe and have knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do” (Al-Mugadala 58:11)

The prophet (PBUH) said,

“وَإِنَّ فَضْلَ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ” ، (أخرجه أبو داود والترمذي وابن ماجه وأحمد)

"A learned person ('Alim) is as much superior to a worshiper ('Abid) as the full moon is superior to all stars."

The Prophet's companion Muadh ibn Jabal (معاذ بن جبل) emphasized the value of knowledge:

عن معاذ بن جبل أنه قال : " تَعَلَّمُوا الْعِلْمَ ، فَإِنَّ تَعَلَّمَهُ لِلَّهِ حَشِيَّةٌ ، وَطَلَبَهُ عِبَادَةٌ ، وَمَدَاكِرَتُهُ تَسْبِيحٌ ، وَالْبَحْثُ عَنْهُ جِهَادٌ ، وَتَعْلِيمُهُ لِمَنْ لَا يَعْلَمُهُ صَدَقَةٌ ، يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَقْوَامًا فَيَجْعَلُهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرِ قَادَةً ، وَهُدَاةً يَهْتَدَى بِهِمْ ، وَأَئِمَّةً فِي الْخَيْرِ تُفْتَضُّ آثَارُهُمْ ، وَتَرْمَقُ أَعْمَالُهُمْ ، وَبُنْتَهَى إِلَى رَأْيِهِمْ ، إِمَامُ الْعَمَلِ وَالْعَمَلُ ، قَالَ : تَابِعُهُ ، يُلْهَمُهُ السُّعْدَاءُ ، وَيُحْرِمُهُ الْأَشْقِيَاءُ " [روى أبو نعيم في الحلية]

“Seek knowledge, for learning it brings awareness of Allah. Seeking it is worship; searching for it is Jihad; teaching it to those who do not know is charity. With it, Allah elevates people, making them exemplary leaders and guides for those seeking righteousness. Knowledge is an Imam (leader), and deeds are its followers. Only the blessed are hungry for it; the wicked are deprived of it. ”

Imam Al-Hassan Al-Basri warned against actions without knowledge, stating,

قال الحسن البصري رحمه الله تعالى: "العامل على غير علم كالسالك على غير طريق، والعامل على غير علم يفسد أكثر مما يصلح، فإن قومًا طلبوا العبادة وتركوا العلم حتى خرجوا بأسيا فهم على أمة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، ولو طلبوا العلم لم يدلهم على ما فعلوا" [جامع بيان العلم وفضله، ابن عبد البر]

"One who acts without knowledge is like one who is not on any road; he causes more harm than good. Some sought worship without knowledge, leading them to carry swords against the nation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Had they sought knowledge, they would not have acted as they did."

Past and current history shows that lack of knowledge and understanding of Islam can result in chaos and harm. The Prophet (PBUH) described such people:

عن علي رضي الله عنه قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "سيخرج في آخر الزمان قوم أحداث الأسنان سفهاء الأحلام يقولون من خير قول البرية، يقرأون القرآن لا يجاوز حناجرهم، يمرقون من الدين كما يمرق السهم من الرمية، فإذا لقيتموهم فاقتلوهم، فإن في قتلهم أجراً لمن قتلهم عند الله يوم القيامة." [مسلم]

"In the end times, there will come a people young in years, foolish in minds, who quote the sayings of the Messenger and recite the Qur'an, but it will not go beyond their throats. They leave this religion as an arrow leaves its target. Stand against them, for those who do will be rewarded on the Day of Resurrection." (Reported by Muslim)

Barriers to Proper Worship

There are four main barriers to the proper worship of Allah: arrogance, fear, lack of commitment, and confusion/ignorance.

1. Arrogance

Arrogance is the most dangerous barrier to worship; it prevented Satan from obeying Allah's command. Allah says:

﴿فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ البقرة: 34
“And when We said to the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they prostrated, all but Iblis (Satan). He refused and showed arrogance and became one of the disbelievers.” (Al-Baqara 2:34)

Arrogance is a severe disease of the heart, with dire consequences in the Hereafter. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن عبد الله بن مسعود عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: “لا يدخل الجنة من كان في قلبه مثقال ذرة من كبر” (رواه مسلم وأحمد وغيرهما)

“No one will enter Paradise if he has in his heart an atom weight of arrogance”.

Arrogance arises when a person desires to be like God, but no one can be like God. Attempting to be like God leads one to become like Satan.

2. Fear

Fear of the unknown is a natural human emotion, but fear that leads one to disobey Allah's commands reflects a lack of trust in Allah. One must trust that Allah controls one's fortune and lifespan. Trust in Allah is the cure for fear of poverty, death, and the future of one's children. Only when fear is removed can one truly be free.

Some fear poverty despite Allah's assurance:

((وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ (۲۲) فَوَرَبَّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِّثْلَ مَا أَنَّكُمْ تَنْطُقُونَ)) الذاريات: 22- 23

“And in Heaven is your fortunes and what you have been promised. (22) By the Lord of the heaven and the earth, this is the truth, as certain as you can speak.” (Al-Zariyat 51:22-23)

We may fear for our children's future, leading us to violate Allah's commands. Allah knows that fear of children's future drives greed and misery. He reveals that righteousness is the insurance needed for one's children:

((وَلِيُخْشِ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا)) النساء: 9

“Let those who fear leaving helpless children behind have Taqwa of Allah and only say what is right.” (Al-Nisaa 4:9)

Allah provides examples of protecting the children of the righteous in the Quran. In Surah Al-Baqara, a righteous man left a small calf in Allah's trust, which became extremely valuable. In Surah Al-Kahf, Allah sent two

prophets to protect the wealth of young orphans because their father was righteous.

Early Muslims understood this well. Mohammad Ibn Kaab Al-Qarzi gave charity instead of saving money for his children, trusting Allah to care for them:

وروي أن محمد بن كعب القرظي أصاب مالا كثيراً فقبل له: لو ادخرته لولدك من بعدك قال: لا ولكني أدخره لنفسي عند ربي وأدخر ربي لولدي.

“I save this money for myself with my Lord, and I save my Lord for my children”.

Trusting Allah eliminates fear of the future, bringing peace and freedom. Surrendering to Allah frees one from all other fears.

3. Lack of Commitment

Many Muslims aspire to perfect their worship of Allah but lack the willingness to fully obey Him. A major factor is the false hope of a long life, leading to procrastination. Allah says:

((أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ.)) الحديد: 16

“Has the time not yet come for those who believe that their hearts should be humbled by the remembrance of Allah and the truth revealed, and not become like those who received the Scripture before, and whose hearts were hardened over time and thus many of them became sinners.” (Al-Hadid 57:16)

The Prophet (PBUH) warned against procrastination:

وعن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لرجل وهو يعظه : " اغتنم خمساً قبل خمس : شبابك قبل هرمك ، وصحتك قبل سقمك ، وغناك قبل فقرك ، وفراغك قبل شغلك ، وحياتك قبل موتك " . [رواه الحاكم]

“Take advantage of five before five: your youth before old age, your health before sickness, your wealth before poverty, your life before death, and your free time before preoccupation”.

4. Confusion/Ignorance

Proper worship requires knowledge. Many fail due to confusion, often stemming from a lack of interest in learning. People may follow what they are told without verifying the information. In Islam, accurate knowledge must precede actions. Allah says:

((وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا)) (الإسراء: 36)

“Do not follow anything about which you have no knowledge. Surely, the hearing, the sight, and the heart—each of those, one will be questioned.” (Al-Isra 17:36)

Everyone is accountable for their actions and must have knowledge to defend them before Allah on Judgment Day. Recognizing right from wrong in every aspect of life requires knowledge. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “

قال صلى الله عليه وسلم : " من سلك طريقاً يطلب فيه علماً
سهل الله له طريقاً إلى الجنة " (رواه البخاري)

**"Whoever seeks a path to acquire knowledge,
Allah will make an easy path for him to paradise."**

Other barriers to worship may exist but they are likely subsets of these four.

The Muslim's Character in the Shade of Allah's Beautiful Names

Basis for the Answer

The fourth question is: What are the traits and qualities that we must possess to fulfill our role and achieve our purpose on earth?

The clear answer is to emulate the traits and qualities of someone with perfect character who has fulfilled their role and achieved their purpose in life. Allah has identified the perfect role model for us in the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Allah says:

((لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا)) الأحزاب: 21.

You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent role model for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often. (Al-Ahzab 33: 21)

Other Prophets also serve as role models, but none are as thoroughly documented as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). However, Allah did ask us to take Prophet Ibrahim and his followers as role models, particularly in their relationship with disbelievers. Allah says:

((قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا
لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرءُؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ))
الممتحنة: 4

“Indeed, there is for you an excellent example in Ibrahim and those with him when they said to their people: "We disown you and whatever you worship

instead of Allah: We have done with you,” (Al-Mumtahina 60:4)

((لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ
وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَمِيدُ)) الممتحنة: 6

“Indeed, for you there is an excellent role model in them, for anyone whose hope is in Allah and in the Last Day. But if any turns away, truly Allah is Free of all Wants, Worthy of all Praise.” (Al-Mumtahina 60:6)

The question then becomes; how do we identify the key traits of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to develop our character? These key traits must relate to the role of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and other Messengers and Prophets of Allah on earth, as well as to us. This role is to serve as Allah’s “Khalifa” (خَلِيفَةً) (vicegerent, deputy) on earth. This role is clearly identified by Allah when He mentioned to the angels His plan to create man. Allah says:

((وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)) البقرة: 30

And when your Lord said to the angels: I am going to create a khalifa (vicegerent, deputy) in the earth, they said: Will You create there one who will make mischief in it and shed blood, while we hymn Your praise and glorify Your name? He said: Certainly, I know what you know not. (Al-Baqara 2:30)

Our assignment on earth is to serve as Allah’s deputy and representative. A key element of this assignment

as Allah’s khalifa on earth is to establish justice. This is identified in Surah Sad in which Allah designated Prophet Dawud (David) as Khalifa on earth to judge among people with justice, which is how Allah wanted us to represent Him. Allah says:

((يٰۤاٰدٰوۤدُ اِنَّا جَعَلٰنٰكَ خَلِيۡفَةً فِى الْاَرْضِ فَاَحْكُمۡ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوٰى فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ)) ص: 26

“O Dawud (David), Indeed we made you a vicegerent on earth: so judge between the people with truth (and justice): and do not follow your desire, lest it misleads you from the Path of Allah:” (Sad 38:26)

So far, we have not established a clear path to identify the traits and qualities that we must possess by taking the Prophet (PBUH) as our role model. A question was raised to the Prophet’s wife, Sayeda Aisha, about the character of the Prophet (PBUH). She said:

. ولما سُئِلَتِ السَّيِّدَةُ عَائِشَةُ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا عَنْ خُلُقِ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ، أَجَابَتْ: أَلَسْتَ تَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ ؟ فَإِنَّ خُلُقَ نَبِيِّ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ الْقُرْآنَ. (رواه مسلم)

“Don’t you read the Quran! The character of the Prophet (PBUH) was the Quran”. (Reported by Muslim and others)

The most important information the Quran provides relates to Allah and His attributes. The name Allah is mentioned more than 1,400 times in the Quran, in addition to references to Allah by His other names/attributes, which are mentioned many times. In fact, Allah is referenced in some Surahs in every verse

(ayat). You will note that every verse that announces glad tidings, presents a promise, declares a threat, or establishes a rule is concluded with attributes of Allah. To understand the verse, you need to carefully reflect on Allah's attributes at its end.

Therefore, if we truly want to fulfill our role and serve as Allah's deputy on earth, we must study Allah's attributes and incorporate most of them into our character. This approach was understood by the companions and early Muslims and is reflected in their understanding of the famous Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah and reported in Al-Boukhari, where the Prophet (PBUH) said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ . أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " إِنَّ لِلَّهِ تِسْعَةً وَتِسْعِينَ اسْمًا مِائَةً إِلَّا وَاحِدًا مَنْ أَحْصَاهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ " . (رواه البخاري).

“Allah has ninety-nine names, one hundred minus one, whoever “Ahsaha” (enumerates them) will enter Paradise.” *Reported by Bukhari)

This simple Hadith represents the cornerstone of belief and the building blocks of the character of a true believer. However, to understand its significance, we need to understand the meaning of the Arabic word “Ahsa” (أحصى), often translated as “count” or “enumerate.” We must note that there are differences between the word “Ahsa” (أحصى) and the word “A’dd” (عدّ), which can be translated as counting. The two terms are used in verse 94 in Surah Maryam. Allah says:

﴿ إِن كَلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتَى الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا ﴾ (93)
[مریم: 93 - 94]

“There is none in the heavens and the earth but bound to come to the All-Merciful as a slave. (93) Surely, we (Ahsa them) “fully encompassed them” “know them” and (add them) “counted them” a full count.” (Maryam 19:93-94)

The word “Ahsa’ also came in Surah Al-Nahl:

((وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ))

النحل 18

“And if you would count a blessing of Allah, you would never be able to (Ahsa it) “enumerate it”. Truly! Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Al-Nahl 16:18)

To understand what the word “Ahsa” means, we need to realize that the term is related to the word “Ihsaa” (إحصاء), which is a branch of mathematics called “statistics” that involves the analysis of data, not just counting. So, the Hadith does not mean that you enter Paradise by memorizing the 99 names of Allah and reciting them; it goes beyond that. The term was interpreted by Sheikh Bin Baz (بن باز) to mean:

حفظها، وأتقنها دخل الجنة، وأحصاؤها يكون بحفظها، وبالعمل بمقتضاها

“Memorized it, perfected their understanding and acted according to them.”

Ibn Abbas said the word “Ahsaha” involves two elements: the first is to learn the names from the Quran and the Sunnah, and the second is to apply them.

Similar interpretations were given by other scholars who said the word "Ahsaha" means "apply them," "submit to them," and "seek a way to make them part of your character." In his book "The Main Objectives in Explaining the Meaning of the Names of Allah" (المقصد الأسنى في شرح معاني أسماء الله الحسنى), Imam Al-Ghazali wrote:

اعلم أن من لم يكن له حظ من معاني أسماء الله عز و جل إلا بأن يسمع لفظه ويفهم في اللغة معنى تفسيره ووضعه ويعتقد بالقلب وجود معناه في الله تعالى فهو ميخوس الحظ نازل الدرجة ليس يحسن به أن يتبجح بما ناله. لكن حظوظ المقرين من معاني أسماء الله تعالى ثلاثة: الحظ الأول معرفة هذه المعاني حتى ينكشف لهم اتصاف الله عز و جل بها انكشافا يجري في الوضوح والبيان مجرى اليقين الحاصل للإنسان . الحظ الثاني هو استعظامهم لصفات الجلال على وجه ينبعث من الاستعظام يشوقهم إلى الاتصاف بما يمكنهم من تلك الصفات ليقتربوا بها من الحق قريبا بالصفة لا بالمكان . الحظ الثالث السعي في اكتساب الممكن من تلك الصفات والتخلق بها والتحلي بمحاسنها وبه يصير العبد ربانيا أي قريبا من الرب تعالى وبه يصير رفيقا للملأ الأعلى من الملائكة

“Know that whoever has no part of the meaning of the names of Allah other than hearing them and understanding their meanings and believing in them by his heart is ill-fated and of lowly rank and he has no right to boast about what he has. But the fortunes of the lucky ones who are near to the meaning of the names of Allah are three:

The first fortune is knowing the meaning of the names of Allah to the point that they are so clear to them to the level of the unshaken belief.

The second fortune is their magnification of the attributes of Allah to the level of their passionate desire to possess them as much as possible to be close to Allah in the attribute but not in place.

The third fortune is that they seek to possess these attributes in every way possible and adopt their beauties in their character to become godly slaves of Allah meaning they become so near to Allah and companions of the angels of the high”.

All these explanations highlight the importance of understanding the meaning of Allah’s attributes and ensuring that we build our character around these names to draw nearer to Allah. While the Prophet (PBUH) did not provide a complete list of these 99 names of Allah, different scholars have assembled them from both the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH). Therefore, you may see differences in these lists, but most of the names are common among them.

When you examine any list of these 99 names and attributes of Allah, you note that they can be classified into three groups: beautiful attributes, perfection attributes, and majestic attributes.

Beautiful Attributes (صفات الجمال): These include attributes that assert the mercy and love of Allah, such as (الرحمن الرحيم السلام الغفور الودود) the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Peace, the Forgiving, the Loving, etc. These names instill in the heart love and hope in Allah.

Perfection Attributes (صفات الكمال): These include attributes that assert Allah’s perfection, such as (الخالق الحي القيوم الأحد الصمد العزيز الحكيم) The Creator, the Ever-Living, The Sustainer, the Only One, The Self-Sufficient, The All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Majestic Attributes (صفات الجلال): These include attributes that assert the grand power of Allah, such as (القوي العزيز الجبار القهار الْمُنتَقِم) the Powerful, the Majestic, the Compeller, the Subduer, the Avenger. These names instill in the heart the fear of Allah.

The intelligent Muslim is the one who fears Allah's majestic attributes and seeks refuge in His beautiful attributes. The Prophet (PBUH) used to supplicate to Allah by saying:

"اللَّهُمَّ أَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِنْ سَخَطِكَ، وَبِمَعْفَاةِكَ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِكَ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْكَ"

"I seek refuge in Your mercy from Your anger. I seek refuge in Your Pardon from Your punishment. I seek refuge in You from You."

Without fear of the majestic and wrath attributes, people become bold and do what they want without worrying about the consequences. Also, without hope in Allah's attractive and gentle attributes, they despair. However, Allah's names of beauty and mercy are more representative of Allah's true nature than the wrath attributes. As Allah says in Surah Al-A'raf:

﴿عَذَابِي أُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءُ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾ الأعراف: 156

"I impose my punishment on whom I will, but My mercy embraces all things" (Al-Araf 7:156).

The prophet (PBUH) said:

وقال النبي ﷺ: "إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ كِتَابًا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ الْخَلْقَ: إِنَّ رَحْمَتِي سَبَقَتْ غَضَبِي، فَهُوَ مَكْتُوبٌ عِنْدَهُ فَوْقَ الْعَرْشِ". (رواه البخاري)

“Allah has written above his throne, “My mercy takes precedence over my wrath”.

Everything we do is either perfect or imperfect, and obviously, the perfect is nobler than the imperfect. While we know that ultimate perfection is unattainable by man and is only limited to Allah, the more perfect we are, the closer we are to Him. To contemplate the attributes of Allah, we need to empty our hearts of desiring anything other than Allah. Knowledge is the seed of desire, but for such a seed to bear fruit, it must be planted in a free heart.

When we study the names and attributes of Allah to understand their meaning and how we can adopt them in our character, we must realize that defining Allah by these attributes is limited because Allah is far more perfect than our language can explain. Allah says:

((لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ)) الشورى: 11

“There is nothing whatever like unto Him.” (Al-Shura 42:11)

Therefore, we must realize that the words we use to describe Allah’s attributes are inadequate and are only used to offer resemblances. We also need to realize that our knowledge is complemented by the knowledge that denies any likeness and commonality, even though the name is shared. The ultimate knowledge of those who know Allah lies in their inability to know Him. This is what is meant by the Prophet when he said:

عن عائشة -رضي الله عنها-، قالت: افْتَقَدْتُ النبي -صلى الله عليه وسلم- ذات ليلة، فَتَحَسَّسْتُ، فَوَقَعَتْ يَدِي عَلَى بَطْنِ قَدَمِيهِ وَهُوَ

يقول: "اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَا أُحْصِي تَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَتَّيَّتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ"
[رواه مسلم.]

"I cannot enumerate Your praise, as You have praised Yourself."

In the next section, we will discuss several of the names/attributes of Allah to explain how they relate to Allah and how we can adopt them in our character to become His true representatives and be His godly slaves. However, the first name is the name of Allah, which we cannot emulate because it is a personal name and not an attribute.

Allah (الله) - The Greatest Name

By counting Allah's name only once in the Basmallah, the name Allah is mentioned 2,930 times in the Quran. For anyone to become a Muslim, they need to declare, **"There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger."**

Allah is not an Eastern or Arabian God as some Westerners might think. Allah is the personal name of the same God that Christians and Jews worship worldwide. In fact, in the Arabic Bible, Allah is the name used for God.

Unlike the word "god," which has gender distinctions like "god" and "goddess," and is subject to plurality like "god" and "gods," Allah is a word that has no gender and is not subject to plurality. This makes Allah an ideal word to describe the one genderless Supreme Being. The most important reason Muslims use the word Allah is that the Creator refers to Himself by this name in Surah Taha in the Quran:

((إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي)) طه: 14
"Verily, I am Allah. There is no god but Me, so worship me, and establish prayers for celebrating My praise" (Taha 20:14).

Allah is the one name that unifies all attributes of divinity, whereas each of the other names refers to a single attribute. The name Allah is analogous to proper names. It is the most specific of the names, and no one has ever used it for anyone other than the Creator, neither literally nor metaphorically.

It is from Allah's mercy that He revealed this name to humanity and taught them to use it. Otherwise, our approach would have been complicated, as we would tend to start our actions by invoking the names of the attributes that we feel necessary to support the action at hand. For example, if one is starting a financial activity, he might say: "In the name of Al-Razzaaq (the provider), Al-Mughni (The Enricher), As-Samee (The Hearer), Al-Mujeeb (The Responsive), Al-Qadir (The Capable)." Instead, we only say, "In the name of Allah."

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1/ Start every action we do by invoking this name, Allah. When we become accustomed to starting all our actions in the name of Allah, we will naturally avoid doing anything displeasing to Him.

2/ Recognizing that the name Allah is unique and befitting because it is genderless and not subject to plurality, we need to consider the names we select for our children. These names must be proper and honorable, without any derogatory or negative implications. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن أبي الدرداء قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : "إنكم تدعون يوم القيامة بأسمائكم وأسماء آبائكم فأحسنوا أسماءكم"
[سنن أبي داود]

"You will all be called on the day of judgement by your names and the names of your fathers. So, always select good names." (Abu Daud, Ahmad)

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: " مِنْ حَقِّ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ ثَلَاثَةٌ أَشْيَاءُ: أَنْ يُحَسِّنَ اسْمَهُ إِذَا وُلِدَ، وَيُعَلِّمَهُ الْكِتَابَ إِذَا عَقَلَ، وَيُرَّجِّحَهُ إِذَا أَدْرَكَ "

"Among the rights of a child upon his parents are three: to give him a good name, to teach him the Book of Allah when he can comprehend, and to get him married when he becomes mature."

Imam Jaffar Al-Sadeq said:

الإمام الصادق عليه السلام: "تَجِبُ لِلْوَالِدِ عَلَى وَالِدِهِ ثَلَاثُ خِصَالٍ : اِخْتِيَارُهُ لَوَالِدَتِهِ ، وَتَحْسِينُ اسْمِهِ ، وَالْمُبَالَغَةُ فِي تَأْدِيهِهِ "

"There are three things obligatory upon a father for his child: to choose a good mother for him, to give him a good name, and to be excessive in teaching him good character."

In the next sections, we will discuss several of the names/attributes of Allah to explain how they relate to Allah and how we can adopt them in our character to become His true representatives and be His godly slaves.

Al-Rahman (الرحمن)

The traditional interpretation of Allah's name Al-Rahman (الرحمان) is that it reflects Allah's attribute of granting mercy to all people in this life, whether they are believers or non-believers. This definition suggests a similarity between Al-Rahman and another name of Allah, Al-Rahim (الرحيم). To differentiate between the two names, interpreters have proposed that Al-Rahim refers to Allah's attribute of granting mercy solely to believers in the hereafter.

However, interpreting Al-Rahman as solely related to mercy reveals a major misunderstanding. This misunderstanding arises because many interpreters and translators derive the term's meaning from the Arabic lexicon. Terms in the Quran should be interpreted based on their use within the Quran itself. The lexicon should only be consulted when the Quran does not provide detailed applications of the term, particularly for terms that appear only once.

When we examine the use of the name Al-Rahman (الرحمان) in the Quran, we find that, excluding the Basmalah except in the first surah, Al-Fatihah, Al-Rahman appears 57 times. The use of the name Al-Rahman in the Quran suggests that Allah, as the sole authority who can assign meanings to words, has assigned this name to Himself as an integration of all His other names and attributes, whether they are related to creation, sending revelation, control and domination, mercy, or punishment. Thus, it is difficult to provide a direct translation for this name. Al-Rahman is the only name that can be used as a substitute for

Allah in any verse in the Quran. This is supported by Allah who said:

((قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ
الْحُسْنَى)) (الإسراء: 110)

**“Say: "call Allah or call Al-Rahman, by whatever name you call, to Him belongs the Best Names.”
(Al-Isra 17:110)**

Additionally, Al-Rahman is the only name that can be used when professing the faith by saying, "There is no god but Al-Rahman" (لا إله إلا الرحمن), which is equivalent to saying, "There is no god but Allah" (لا إله إلا الله). This is implied by the following verse:

((كَذَلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا أُمَمٌ لَّتَتَلَوَا عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِي
أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ
تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ)) (الرعد: 30)

“Thus, have We sent you amongst a nation before which many nations have passed away; in order that you recite to them what We have revealed to you; yet they reject Al-Rahman, say "He is my Lord! There is no god but He. In Him I place my trust and to Him is my return!" (Al-Rad 13:30)

The equivalence of Allah and Al-Rahman is supported by the following Qudsi Hadith that was narrated by the Prophet (PBUH) on behalf of Allah who said:

عن عبد الرحمن بن عوف رضي الله عنه قال : سمعت رسول الله
- صلى الله عليه وسلم - يقول : “ قال الله تبارك وتعالى : أنا الله
وأنا الرحمن ، خلقت الرِّجَمَ ، وشققت لها من اسمي ، فمن وصلها
وصلته ، ومن قطعها بئته ” (رواه الترمذي وأبو داود وأحمد)

“I am Allah, and I am Al-Rahman. I created the “Rahim” (womb) (الرحم) and extracted its name from My name. So, whoever connects with it (family ties), I will keep ties with him and whoever severs it (family ties), I’ll sever ties with him.” (Tirmidhi, Ahmad and Abu Dauod)

The following verses provide examples of the attributes associated with the name Al-Rahman:

1/ Al-Rahman is used in reference to Allah’s perfection attributes of creation and control over all that exists. Allah says:

((وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْخَيِّ الْأَذَى لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ ۚ وَكَفَى بِهِ ۚ
بِدُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ ۚ خَيْرًا (٥٨) الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ۚ الرَّحْمَنُ فَسَلِّ بِهِ ۚ خَيْرًا
((الفرقان: 58-59

“And place your trust in the Ever-Living who does not die; and celebrate His praise; and enough is He to be aware of the sins of His slaves. (58) He Who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between in six days, and is firmly established control on the “Arsh” (Throne) (the biggest creation ever), Al-Rahman, so ask about Him someone who knows,” (Al-Furqan 25:58-59)

((الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى (5) لَهُ ۗ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى)) طه 5-6

“Al-Rahman who is in control of the “Arsh” (Throne). (5) To Him belongs all that in the heavens, all that in the earth and whatever is between them and whatever is underneath the soil.” (Taha 20:5-6)

((الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَاقُوتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ)) الملك: 3

“He created seven skies, one over the other. You will see nothing out of proportion in the creation of Al-Rahman. So, cast your eye again. Do you see any rifts? “(Al-Mulk 67:3)

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَافَّتٍ وَيَقْبِضْنَ مَا يُمَسِّكُهُنَّ إِلَّا
الرَّحْمَنُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ (الملك)

“Have they not seen the birds above them spreading their wings, and (at times) they fold (them) in? No one holds them up except Al-Rahman. Surely, He is watchful of everything.” (Al-Mulk 67:19)

2/ Al-Rahman represents Allah’s majestic attributes that reflect threat and punishment, as in the following verses:

((يَا بَتِّ ابْنِي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ
وَلِيًّا)) مريم: 45

“(Ibrahim said) My dear father, I fear that you will be afflicted by a punishment from Al-Rahman, and you become a companion of Satan.” (Maryam 19:45)

((قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا
يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا
وَأَضْعَفُ جُنْدًا)) مريم: 75

“Say, “Whoever stays straying, Al-Rahman will prolong his span of life until they see what they are

being warned of: either the punishment (in this world) or the Hour (Day of Judgement), then they will know who was worse in position and who is weaker in forces.” (Maryam 19:75)

((إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الذِّكْرَ وَخَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ الْغَيْبَ فَبَشَّرَهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ وَأَجْرٍ كَرِيمٍ)) يس: 11

“You only warn the one who follows the advice and fears Al-Rahman in secret. So, give him good news of forgiveness and a generous reward.”
(Yaseen 36:11)

ءَأَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ ءَالِهَةً إِنْ يُرِدِنِ الرَّحْمَنُ بِضُرٍّ لَا تُغْنِي عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنْقِذُونِ

“Shall I take (other) gods in place of Him. If Al-Rahman intends to do harm to me, their intercession neither help me nor save me?”
(Yaseen 36:23)

((وَمَنْ يَعِشْ عَنِ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقِضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ)) الزخرف: 36

“Whoever makes himself blind to the remembrance of Al-Rahman, We assign for him a devil who becomes his companion all the time.”
(Al-Zughtouf 43:36)

((قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا)) مريم: 18
“She (Maryam) said, “I seek refuge with Al-Rahman against you, if you are God-fearing” (Maryam 19:18)

3/ Al-Rahman implies the Controller and the Dominator of the world and the Hereafter as Allah says:

((إِنَّ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا)) مريم:93
“There is none in the heavens and the earth, but bound to come to Al-Rahman as a slave” (Maryam 19:93)

((يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَّبِعُونَ الدَّاعِيَ لَا عِوَجَ لَهُ وَخَشَعَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ فَلَا تَسْمَعُ إِلَّا هَمْسًا)) طه:108

“That day they will follow the caller without any deviation. And the voices will turn low in awe for Al-Rahman. So, nothing will you hear but whispering” (Taha 20:108)

((وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ السَّمَاءُ بِالْغَمَمِ وَنُزِّلَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَنْزِيلًا)) (25) الْمَلِكُ
 يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَسِيرًا))
 الفرقان:25-26

“The Day the sky will split open with clouds, and angels will be sent down, descending (in ranks) (25) The kingdom on that day is be the true one, belonging to Al-Rahman: it will be a day of dire difficulty for the disbelievers.” (Al-Furqan 25:25:26)

((رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنُ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا)) (37) يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أذِنَ لَهُ
 الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا)) النبأ: 37-38

“The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, Al-Rahman, with Whom none can speak. (37) On the Day when the Spirit (Jibril) and the angels will stand in rows. They will not speak, except for the one who is permitted by Al-Rahman, and speaks aright” (Al-Nabaa 78:37-38)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. When we realize that Allah's name Al-Rahman is a comprehensive attribute encompassing all other attributes of Allah, we learn that to embody this name in our character, we must cultivate a well-balanced personality that integrates many different qualities.
2. While we should develop traits such as being merciful, kind, forgiving, trusting, empathetic, trustworthy, unbiased, reliable, supportive, noble, knowledgeable, visionary, and creative, we must also recognize the need to be firm, resolute, restrained, enforcing, and decisive.
3. Some of these traits may seem contradictory, so it is essential to have knowledge and wisdom to discern the appropriate time, place, and extent to apply each trait.
4. Recognizing the uniqueness of Allah's name, Al-Rahman, it is inappropriate to use it as a name for a person, except in the form Abdulrahman (i.e., slave of Al-Rahman). Those named Abdulrahman should not abbreviate their name by dropping the title "Abd" (slave) and calling themselves Rahman. The one historical figure who called himself Rahman Al-Yamamah (Al-Yamamah being the name of his birthplace) was Musaylimah. He became condemned and is known as "Musaylimah the Liar," serving as an example of dishonesty.

Al-Rahime (الرَّحِيمِ) (The Most Merciful)

Allah's name Al-Rahim (الرحيم) (The Most Merciful) and its indefinite form Rahim (رحيم) (Most Merciful) appear in the Quran in reference to Allah 114 times. It is mentioned six times alongside Allah's Name Al-Rahman, and the rest in association with other names.

One of the key miracles of the Quran is its brevity and focus, beginning with the core message of teaching mankind about Allah. The Quran starts with a verse encompassing all of Allah's names and attributes. This verse is the first in Surat Al-Fatiha (the Opening):

((بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ)) الفاتحة: 1

“In the name of Allah, Al-Rahman, the Rahime” (Al-Fatiha 1:1)

In this single verse, the proper and personal name Allah is given, along with the integrated name of all His attributes, Al-Rahman. These attributes are encapsulated with the key attribute of being merciful (Rahim). While Allah's name Al-Rahman may reflect some of the attributes of imposing severe punishment that instills fear in the hearts of disbelievers and awe in the hearts of believers due to His power and absolute control over everything, this is motivated by His key attribute of mercy, as Allah says:

((عَذَابِيْٓ اُصِیْبُ بِهٖ مَنْ اَشَاءُ وَرَحْمَتِيْ وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ)) الاعراف:

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“I impose my punishment on whom I will, but My mercy embraces all things” (Al-Araf 7:156).

The prophet (PBUH) said:

أبا هريرة قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ كِتَابًا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ الْخَلْقَ: إِنَّ رَحْمَتِي سَبَقَتْ غَضَبِي، فَهُوَ مَكْتُوبٌ عِنْدَهُ فَوْقَ الْعَرْشِ." | البخاري]

"Allah has written above his throne, "My mercy takes precedence over my wrath". (Bukhari)

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

أبا هريرة قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "جعل الله الرحمة مائة جزء فأمسك عنده تسعة وتسعين جزءا وأنزل في الأرض جزءا واحدا فمن ذلك الجزء يتراحم الخلق حتى ترفع الفرس حافرها عن ولدها خشية أن تصيبه." | البخاري]

"Allah divided Mercy into one hundred parts, and He kept ninety-nine parts with Him and sent down one part to the earth. Because of that one part, His creations are merciful to each other, so much so that a mare lifts its hoof away from its baby animal, lest it should harm it." (Bukhari)

A key aspect of Allah's mercy is that He instituted repentance to forgive those who make mistakes and commit sins. He said:

((قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ)) الزمر: 53

Say: "O my righteous slaves who have transgressed against their own souls, do not despair of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is the Forgiver, the Merciful. (Al-Zumr 39:53)

Allah's name Al-Rahim (the Most Merciful) is most often associated with Al-Ghafur (the Forgiver), appearing together in 74 verses. However, Al-Rahim also appears 13 times alongside Al-Aziz (the All-Mighty), indicating that Allah's mercy and forgiveness are not a blank check for people to commit evil without accountability. While Allah can forgive all sins, He has identified one sin He will never forgive, which is associating others with Him, as He said:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا)) النساء: 48

“Allah does not forgive associating a partner with Him and He forgives anything else to whom He wills. Whoever sets a partner with Allah commits a sin that is most heinous indeed.” (Al-Nisa 4:48)

((وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ)) الزمر: 65

And verily it has been revealed to you and to those before you that if you were to associate any partner with Allah, all your deeds would be utterly futile, and you would be among the losers. (Al-Zumr 39:65)

Another key aspect of Allah's mercy is that He rewards tenfold for each good deed but accounts only once for each bad deed. Allah said:

((مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ)) الأنعام: 160

“Whoever comes (to the day of Judgment) with a good deed shall have ten times the like of it in reward and whoever comes with bad deed he will only be requited with no more than the like of it and they shall not be wronged”. (Al-An’am 6: 160)

Furthermore, when we do a bad deed and follow it with a good deed, the bad deed will be erased. Allah says:

((وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَرُفْعًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَى لِلذَّاكِرِينَ)) هود: 114

“And establish prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with bad deeds. That is a reminder or those who remember.” (Hud 11:114)

Additionally, our bad deeds can be replaced with good deeds. In Surah Al-Furqan, Allah says about the righteous slaves of Al-Rahman:

((فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ)) الفرقان: 70

Allah will substitute their evil deeds with good deeds.” (Al-Furqan 25:70)

However, we must be careful of two actions that can nullify the rewards of good deeds: boasting about the good deed and harming the person to whom we have done the good deed. Allah says:

((يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى)) البقرة:

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“O you who believe, do not nullify your charity with boastful reminders and harm (Al-Baqarah 2:264)

Another important aspect of Allah's mercy is that He rewards for intentions. If one intends to commit a bad deed but does not do it, Allah rewards him for refraining. If one intends to do a good deed but is unable to do it, Allah rewards him for his intention as if he did it. In a divine (Qudsi) hadith, the Prophet (PBUH) narrated on behalf of Allah, who said:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - : قال الله عز وجل : " إذا تحدث عبدي بأن يعمل حسنة فأنا أكتبها له حسنة ما لم يعمل ، فإذا عملها فأنا أكتبها بعشر أمثالها ، وإذا تحدث بأن يعمل سيئة فأنا أغفرها له ما لم يعملها ، فإذا عملها فأنا أكتبها له بمثلها ، وقال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - قالت الملائكة : رب ذاك عبدك يريد أن يعمل سيئة وهو أبصر به ، فقال : ارقبوه ، فإن عملها فاكتبوها له بمثلها ، وإن تركها فاكتبوها له حسنة ، فإنما تركها من جرّاي " [رواه الشيخان ، وهذه رواية مسلم]

"If My servant intends to do a good deed but does not do it, I will record it for him as one good deed. If he does it, I will record it as ten good deeds. If he intends to do an evil deed but does not commit it, I will forgive him. But if he commits it, I will record it as one evil deed. The angels said: 'Our Lord, Your servant intended to commit evil,' but Allah, who knows best, said: 'Watch him; if he commits it, write it against him by its equivalent, but if he refrains for My sake, write it for him as one good deed.'" (Bukhari and Muslim).

This hadith represents a great gift from Allah if we take advantage of it with pure intention. This principle is also reported in the record of past prophets. For instance, during the time of Prophet Musa (Moses) (PBUH), the children of Bani Israel suffered from

poverty and famine. A simple shepherd, looking at the mountains where he was grazing sheep, said

قد جاء في الأثر أنه قد أصاب بني إسرائيل زمن موسى عليه السلام فاقة ومجاعة، “وأنَّ راعياً بسيطاً نظَرَ إلى الجبال حيث يرعى غنم الناس، وقال: اللهم إنك تعلمُ أنه لو كان لي مثل هذه الجبال ذهباً لتصدقتُ بها على عبادك! فأوحى الله تعالى إلى موسى عليه السلام أن يا موسى قُلْ لعبدِي أُنِي قبلتُ منه صدقته!”

“O Allah, You know that if I had such mountains of gold, I would give it all as charity to help Your slaves.” Allah revealed to Musa (PBUH) to tell this shepherd that Allah accepted his charity.”

Mercy is the hallmark of Islam; Allah described the mission of the Prophet (PBUH) by saying:

((وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ)) الأنبياء: 107

“We have not sent you, except as a mercy for all creatures.” (Al-Anbia 21:107)

The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized the importance of mercy in many of his sayings. For example, he (PBUH) said:

حديث أبي هريرة قال رسول الله ﷺ يا أيُّها النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَحْمَةٌ مُّهْدَاةٌ [البخاري]

“O People, I am but a guided Mercy” (Bukhari)

حديث أبي هريرة قال رسول الله ﷺ من لا يرحم لا يُرحم [أخرجه البخاري، ومسلم].

“Who does not show mercy will not be shown mercy (by Allah).”

More than through sayings, the Prophet (PBUH) demonstrated mercy through his actions throughout his life. A clear example is his response after the Battle of

Uhud when the Quraysh army attacked him and his followers in Madina. During the battle, several of his companions were killed, including his uncle and major supporter Hamza, and the Prophet (PBUH) himself was severely injured. When his companions asked him to supplicate to Allah against the people of Quraysh, he (PBUH) instead said: (اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِقَوْمِي فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ) “**O Allah, forgive my people, for they do not know.**” Also, when he (PBUH) gained victory against the people of Quraysh, instead of taking revenge for all the harm and suffering they caused him and his companions for 20 years, he (PBUH) forgave all of them.

There are many examples of the applications of Allah’s name Al-Rahim (The Most Merciful).

Elements to Adopt in our Character

To incorporate Allah’s name Al-Rahim in our character, our actions should include at least the following three elements:

1. Anchoring our actions with mercy even when someone commits injustice against us.
2. Showing mercy to the negligent and disobedient by demonstrating a commitment to help them overcome their negligence towards Allah to secure His mercy.
3. Never turn away from any needy person and commit to meet their needs to the extent of our ability. Even if you cannot offer the needed help, you should show sympathy and love and assist them through your prayers to Allah to satisfy their needs.

Al-Malik (الملك) - The King, The Sovereign

Allah's name, Al-Malik (الملك), which can be translated as The King or The Sovereign, is revealed in the Quran five times in five verses: Taha 20:114, Al-Muminun 23:116, Al-Hashr 59:23, Al-Jumu'ah 62:1, and Al-Naas 114:2.

Allah is Al-Malik, The King, but unlike other kings in at least four ways:

1. While earthly kings have limited territories, Allah, the King, has full control over the entire universe, including all the earth and the heavens.
2. While earthly kings do not own everything in their kingdoms, Allah, the King, owns everything in the universe. Anything owned by others is merely a temporary trust placed under their control by Allah.
3. While earthly kings do not have full control over everything in their kingdoms, Allah, the King, has complete control over everything that happens in the earth and the heavens. Nothing occurs in the universe, not even a leaf falling from a tree, without Allah's knowledge.
4. While earthly kings need services from their subjects, Allah, the King, has no need of anyone or anything. Conversely, everything in the universe is in need of Him.

Therefore, invoking Allah's name Al-Malik (the King) reminds us of five unique elements:

1. He is the ruler over all that exists in the universe.
2. He is the owner of everything that exists.
3. He has full control over everything that exists.
4. He has no need for anything that exists.
5. Everything that exists is in need of Him.

Everything anyone has, whether power, wealth, health, dignity, or knowledge, is the property of Allah. He entrusts them to individuals temporarily, but He continues to own and control them and can take them away or multiply them at any time. Allah says in Surah Al-Imran:

((قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ...)) آل عمران: 26

“Say: O Allah, the Owner of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will and take the kingdom away from whom You will. You bestow honor on whom You will and bring disgrace to whom You will. In Your hand is all that is good. Verily, You have power over all things.” (Al-Imran 3:26)

Early Muslims understood this name well, knowing that everything they owned belonged to Allah and that they were merely trustees. When asked who owned their camels, a simple Arab would answer without hesitation, **“They belong to Allah, Who placed them in my hand as a temporary trust.”**

This perspective should shape our view of all we have. They belong to Allah, and He has entrusted us with

them. We should have more trust in what is in Allah's hand than what is in our own. To be rich, trust that all wealth is in Allah's hand. To be powerful, rely entirely on Allah. To be honorable, be righteous and fear Allah.

To be the wealthiest, most powerful, most generous, and happiest person, be conscious of Allah, rely on Him, and trust that everything you want is in His hand. The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized self-reliance and not asking for help from others. He (PBUH) said:

عن ثوبان رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: (مَنْ يَكْفُلُ لِي أَنْ لَا يَسْأَلَ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا، وَأَتَكَفَّلَ لَهُ بِالْجَنَّةِ) [رواه أبو داود]

“Whoever guarantees me not to ask people for anything, I guarantee him paradise”. (Abu Dawoud)

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: (لَإِنْ يَحْتَطَبُ أَحَدُكُمْ حِزْمَةَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ، خَيْرَ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ أَحَدًا فَيُعْطِيَهُ أَوْ يَمْنَعَهُ). [البخاري]

“It is better for anyone to go and collect wood to carry on his back instead of asking people for help, and they either give him or refuse him” (Bukhari)

The Prophet's companion Abu Dhar said:

عن أبي ذر رضي الله عنه قال: (أَمَرَنِي خَلِيلِي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِسَبْعِ: أَمَرَنِي بِحُبِّ الْمَسَاكِينِ، وَالِدُنُوِّ مِنْهُمْ، وَأَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ دُونِي، وَلَا أَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ فَوْقِي، وَأَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَصِلَ الرَّجِمَ وَإِنْ أَدْبَرْتُ، وَأَمَرَنِي أَنْ لَا أَسْأَلَ أَحَدًا شَيْئًا.) [رواه أحمد]

"My dear friend (PBUH) ordered me to do seven things: to love the needy, to be close to them, to look at those who are less fortunate than me, to

not look at those who are more fortunate than me, to connect with my extended family even if they boycotted me, and to never ask people for anything." (Ahmad)

The Prophet's companion Awf Ibn Malik said:

عن عوف بن مالك الأشجعي رضي الله عنه قال: (كنا عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تسعة أو ثمانية أو سبعة، فقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: ألا تبايعون رسول الله؟ قال: فبسطنا أيدينا وقلنا: قد بايعناك يا رسول الله! فعلام نبايعك؟ قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: على أن تعبدوا الله ولا تشركوا به شيئاً، والصلوات الخمس، وتطيعوا، ولا تسألوا الناس شيئاً. قال عوف: فلقد رأيت بعض أولئك النفر يسقط سوط أحدهم، فما يسأل أحداً يناوله إياه) [رواه مسلم]

“We were with the Prophet (PBUH) when He said: Do you want to make a solemn pledge with the messenger of Allah? We all extended our hands and asked: what will we give our pledge? He (PBUH) said: to worship Allah and not associate anything with Him, to perform the five prayers, to obey me, and to not ask people for anything.”

Awf Ibn Malik said that those who gave the pledge never asked people for anything, even if a whip fell from their hands while riding a camel, they would go down and pick it up themselves instead of asking anyone to hand it to them.

A student asked his righteous teacher for advice. The teacher said: “Be a king in this life, and you will become a king in the hereafter.”

The student inquired, “How would I do that?”

The teacher replied: “If you don't need anything from anyone, you become their equal, but if you need something from them, you become their prisoner. If

you are generous to people, you become their king. If you become a king in this life, you will be a king in the hereafter.”

Elements to Adopt in our Character

To incorporate elements of this divine name, Al-Malik, into our character and thus be kings in this life, we should adopt the following traits:

1. Be kings over ourselves by having full ownership and control over our desires and passions, not allowing them to control us
2. Limit our need from anyone and do not seek help from anyone other than Allah. To be king among people is to need nothing from anyone other than Allah. We are reminded of this at least 17 times every day when we recite in Al-Fatiha: **إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ** “**You alone we worship and from You alone we seek help.**” Even if we need to ask for help, we should never humiliate ourselves or get angry if not helped, as the person is merely a means, not the source. Only Allah decrees whether He wants to grant us the help we need and designate who can help us.
3. Have full trust in Allah and no fear of losing wealth or power. To be a king among people, always be the giver and the helper because you believe that the source from which you draw your wealth and power is infinite, and no matter how much you spend, you will have more from the Ultimate King, Allah.

Al-Quddus (القدوس) - The Pure One, The Holy

The name of Allah, "Al-Quddus," appears in two verses of the Qur'an:

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ)) الحشر: 23
"He is Allah, there is no god but He, the King, the Holy" (Al-Hashr 59:23)

((يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ))
الجمعة: 1

"Whatever is in the Heavens and on the Earth celebrates the praises of Allah, the King, the Holy."
(Al-Jumu'ah 62:1)

The name "Al-Quddus" is derived from the root "qudus" (قدس), signifying purity and freedom from imperfection.

"Al-Quddus" (القدوس) is translated as "the Pure One," "the Absolutely Perfect," and "the Holy." Scholars describe "Al-Quddus" as: "The pure, free from all descriptions of human perfections." Though this may seem unclear, it implies that Allah's perfections are limitless, beyond any finite human comparison. Allah's perfections in knowledge, power, wisdom, hearing, sight, and speech, transcend all human attributes; they are beyond any human description or imagination, even as we use limited human terms to describe them.

When Allah informed the angels that He would create a Khalifa (خَلِيفَةً), or vicegerent, on Earth, they replied:

((أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ
وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنْ أَعْلَمَ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ.)) البقرة: 30

“Will You place in it someone who will cause mischief in it and shed blood, while we, we hymn Your praise and glorify Your holiness? He said: I know that which you do not know.” (Al-Baqara 2:30)

The angels’ act (وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ) was translated as “glorify Your holiness,” but it can also mean “we sanctify ourselves for You,” signifying their effort to purify themselves to be close to Allah.

Allah attributes purity to certain of His creations, deriving their names from "Al-Quddus":

1. The archangel Gabriel is called “Ruh Al-Qudus” (رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ), or “the Holy Spirit,” because of his purity in conveying revelation to Allah’s messengers.
2. Palestine is named “Al-Ard Al-Muqadasah” (الأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ), or “the Holy Land.”
3. The valley where Allah spoke to Prophet Moses is called “Al-Wadi Al-Muqadas” (الْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ), the “Holy Valley.”

The teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasize both physical and spiritual purity, essential for serving as Allah’s vicegerent (Khalifa). In a hadith Qudsi, Allah says:

عبدى طهرت منظر الخلق سنين، أفلا طهرت منظري ساعة.

“My slave, you have purified yourself for people for many years, wouldn’t you be able to purify yourself for me even for one hour.”

We know that Allah values the purity of heart and deeds, as He says:

“إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ ” (مسلم)

“Allah does not look at your appearance or your wealth, but He looks at your heart and your deeds”.

While we might be impressed by someone’s appearance, Allah judges by the heart and deeds, as righteous actions reflect the purity of the heart. Allah says:

((يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ (88) إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ))
الشعراء: 89-88

“On that Day, neither wealth nor children will benefit anyone, (88), except one who comes to Allah with a pure heart.” (Al-Shu’ara 26:88-89)

The Prophet (PBUH) also taught the importance of bodily cleanliness, encouraging regular washing and bathing beyond ritual washing before prayer, including weekly bathing and after certain conditions.

Examples of the Prophet’s (PBUH) teachings on physical purity include:

عن أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: “الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ...” رواه مسلم

“Purification is part of Faith. ” (Muslim)

عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: “طَهَّرُوا هَذِهِ الْأَجْسَادَ، طَهَّرَكُمُ اللَّهُ؛ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَبِيْتُ طَاهِرًا إِلَّا بَاتَ مَعَهُ فِي شِعَارِهِ مَلَكٌ، لَا يَنْقَلِبُ سَاعَةً مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِعَبْدِكَ؛ فَإِنَّهُ بَاتَ طَاهِرًا” (للطبراني)

“Purify your bodies, and Allah will purify you. No one sleeps purified but that an angel remains with him, supplicating to Allah every hour of the night, saying, ‘O Allah, forgive Your slave, for he slept in a state of purity.’” (Al-Tabarani)

The Prophet (PBUH) also emphasized the purification of the mouth by brushing the teeth with a miswak, stating:

قَالَتْ أُمُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَائِشَةُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: “السَّوَاكُ مَطَهْرَةٌ لِلْفَمِ، مَرْضَاةٌ لِلرَّبِّ” رواه البخاري.

“The miswak is a cleanser for the mouth and pleasing to the Lord.” (Bukhari)

While the purity of the heart is paramount, personal appearance is also valued as an acknowledgment of Allah’s blessings in creating us in the best form. Allah says:

((خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَكُمْ صِدِّقًا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ)) التَّعَابُثُ: 3

He has created the heavens and the earth with truth, and He shaped you and made your shapes good, And to Him is the final Return. (Al-Taghabun 64:3)

The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized that Muslims should look presentable, as each Muslim represents Islam. He said:

عن سهل ابن الحنظلية قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم : " أحسنوا لباسكم وأصلحوا رجالكم حتى تكونوا كأنكم شامة في " . [أخرجه أبو داود والحاكم وأحمد]

“Dress well and organize your travels, so you will appear noble among people”.

The Prophet (PBUH) exemplified personal cleanliness and beauty in his clothing and fragrance. He never left the house without being properly dressed and using perfume. His wife Aisha (RA) said:

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: (كان يحب الطيب، ويأمر به).

The Prophet (PBUH) used to love perfumes and orders others to use them.

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

عن أبي ذر رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "من اغتسل يوم الجمعة فأحسن الغُسل، وتطهَّر فأحسن الطهور، ولبسَ مِنْ أحسن ثيابه، ومَسَّ ما كتَبَ اللهُ له مِنْ طيبٍ أو دُهنٍ أهله، ثُمَّ أتى المسجد، فلم يَلْغُ، ولم يُفَرِّقْ بينَ اثنين، غفر اللهُ له ما بينه وبين الجمعة الأُخرى" (رواه الطبراني)

“Whoever washes on Friday, purifies himself, dresses in his best clothes, applies perfume, and then goes to the mosque without idly talking or separating people, Allah will forgive him for sins between this Friday and the next.” (Al-Tabarani)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

One who understands the meaning of "Al-Quddus" (الْقُدُّوسِ) will strive to purify themselves, especially in moments of prayer or supplication. To embody Allah's name "Al-Quddus," we must purify our hearts, knowledge, actions, and bodies. These are key aspects to incorporate into our character:

1. Purifying the heart from hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy, arrogance, miserliness, etc.
2. Filling the heart with love for Allah and the desire for Paradise.
3. Purifying knowledge from falsehoods and vanities.
4. Refraining from sinful actions.
5. Maintaining cleanliness and beauty in physical appearance.
6. Ensuring purity in the places we visit, the people we befriend, the words we speak, the thoughts we entertain, and the actions we take.

As-Salam (السلام) “The Peace”, The Flawless

Allah’s name *As-Salaam*, "The Peace," appears once in the Quran in Surat Al-Hashr:

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ
الْمُهَيِّمُنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)) الحشر:
(23)

“He is Allah, there is no god but He, the King, the Holy, the Peace, The Keeper of Faith, the Guardian, the Eminent, the Compeller, the Proud. Glory to Allah above what they associate with Him.” (Al-Hashr 59:23)

Abu-Hurairah (أبي هريرة) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

“إن اسم السلام من أسماء الله تعالى فأفشوه بينكم” (الطبراني)
“The name Al-Salaam (The Peace) is among the names of Allah, the Most-High, so spread it among yourselves”. (Al-Tabarani)

Both Thouban (ثوبان) and Aisha (عائشة) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) would say after completing his prayers::

“اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلَامُ، وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ، تَبَارَكَتْ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ
” (صحيح مسلم)
“O Allah, you are The Peace and from you is peace. Blessed are you, the Majestic and Generous.”
(Muslim)

The name Al-Salaam is derived from the Arabic root s-l-m (سلم) which has the following meanings:

1. Source of peace, tranquility, contentment, security, health, and prosperity.
2. Freedom from imperfections, faults, and impurity
3. Completeness of purity and wholeness.

The name *Al-Salaam* encompasses:

1. Allah's attributes are perfect and pure.
2. Allah is the source of peace, safety, and security for all creation.
3. Allah's actions are free from any harm or evil.

As *Al-Salaam*, Allah is the source of all peace and security in the world. This concept is exemplified through various aspects of creation:

1. **In the Human Body:** Allah designed the body with multi built-in protections. For instance:
 - The kidney's redundancy allows survival with one kidney.
 - The location of arteries deep beneath the skin protects them from injury, while veins are more accessible for blood samples.
 - The rigidity of an infant's nose enables safe breathing while breastfeeding.
2. **In Water:** Water's unique property of expanding when it freezes allows ice to float, insulating the water below and preventing oceans from freezing entirely.

Usage of *As-Salaam* in Islamic Vocabulary

1. **Greeting of Peace:** Muslims greet with *As-Salaamu Alaykum* ("Peace be unto you"), a

greeting initiated by Prophet Adam as taught by Allah. The Prophet (PPBUH) Said:

عن أبي هريرة -رضي الله عنه- عن النبي -صلى الله عليه وسلم- قال: «لما خلق الله آدم -صلى الله عليه وسلم- قال: اذهب فسلم على أولئك -نفر من الملائكة جلوس- فاستمع ما يُحيونك؛ فإنها تحييتك وتحية ذريتك. فقال: السلام عليكم، فقالوا: السلام عليك ورحمة الله، فزادوه: ورحمة الله.» [متفق عليه.]

After Allah created Adam, He told him to and greet this group of angels who are there and listen to how they will greet you because it is your greeting and the greeting of your descendants. Adam went and said “Asalaam Alukum” (Peace be unto you)”. They answered, “Alyk Asalaam Wa Rahmat Allah” (Peace and Mercy of Allah be unto you), they added Mercy of Allah. (Bukhari and Muslim)

2. **Response to Evil:** The righteous respond to belligerence with peace, as stated in the Quran:

((وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا)) الفرقان: 63

“The righteous slaves of Al-Rahman are those who walk on the earth humbly and respond with peace when addressed by the ignorant.” (Al-Furqan 25:63)

3. **Paradise as Dar Al-Salaam:** Paradise is called the “Abode of Peace,” a place of ultimate safety and tranquility. Allah says:

((وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ))
يونس: 25

**“Allah invites to the abode of peace and guides whomsoever he wants to the straight Path.”
(Yunus 10:25)**

4. **Real Peace in Paradise:** In paradise, all sources of conflict are removed. The righteous are promised entry in peace and eternal joy, Allah Says:

((أَدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ءَامِنِينَ (46) وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ (47) لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُمْ مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ)) الحجر: 46-48

“Enter here in Peace and Security.” (46) And We shall remove any grudge from their hearts: (they will be) brothers (joyfully) sitting on couches, facing each other. (47) No fatigue shall touch them, nor will they be asked to leave from there.” (Al-Hijr 15:45-48)

5. **Peace in Paradise’s Greeting:** Those who enter paradise are welcomed with peace:

((وَأُدْخِلَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ)) إبراهيم: 23

“And those who believed and did good deeds shall be admitted to Gardens underneath which rivers flow, living there forever by the will of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be: Peace.” (Ibrahim 14:23)

6. **The Quran as a Guide to Peace:** The Quran guides people to the path of peace.

((...قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ (...)) المائدة: 15-16

“There has come to you from Allah, a light and clear book (15) With it Allah guides who seeks His pleasure to the path of Peace.” (Al-Maeda 5:15-16)

7. The Greeting of the Righteous on Judgment

Day: Those who receive their deeds in their right hand will be greeted with peace:

((وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ (90) فَسَلِّمْ لَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ)) الواقعة: 90-91

“And if he is from among the people of the right, (90) (it will be said to them) “Peace to you,” as you are one of the people of the Right. “(Al-Waqia 56: 90-91)

8. Islam as the Path to Peace

The essence of Islam can be summarized around Allah’s name Al-Salaam (The Peace) “Allah is the Peace (Al-Salaam) and He revealed the Quran to guide humanity to the path of peace (سبيل السلام) to ensure that they live in peace (في سلام) and this leads them to the final destination which is the abode of peace (دار السلام), where they will enter it in peace (بسلام) and they will greet each other with peace (سلام) greetings..

The Prophet (PBUH) encouraged spreading peace to enter paradise, saying:

عن عبد الله بن سلام، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ: “أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ، وَأَطْعِمُوا الطَّعَامَ، وَصَلُّوا بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ، تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِسَلَامٍ” [رواه أحمد والترمذي والحاكم]

“O people, spread peace, feed others, pray at night when people are sleeping, and you will enter paradise in peace.” (Ahmad, Tirmidhi)

The Prophet (PBUH) also emphasized:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "لا تدخلون الجنة حتى تؤمنوا، ولا تؤمنوا حتى تحابوا، أولا أدلكم على شيء إذا فعلتموه تحاببتم: أفشوا السلام بينكم" [رواه مسلم]

"You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love each other. Shall I tell you something that, if you did, you would love each other? Spread peace among yourselves"
(Muslim)

The Prophet's Dedication to Peace

The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah (صَلْحَ الْخُدَيْبِيَّةِ) demonstrates the Prophet's (PBUH) commitment to peace, as he accepted an agreement that seemingly disadvantaged the Muslims, solely for the sake of ten years of peace.

Understanding Evil in Light of Al-Salaam

Allah's name *Al-Salaam* implies that His actions are free from evil, and are intended to ensure peace, safety, and security for mankind. However, this world is a place of trials where even seemingly negative events can yield positive outcomes. For instance, painful surgery can be lifesaving. Similarly, Allah sometimes permits challenges to guide people to a better path. There is no absolute evil; every hardship has a potential good outcome. Allah reminds us:

((ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ
بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ..)) الروم: 41

"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by what people's hands have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of]

what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].” (Al-Rum 30:41)

((وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ))
الشورى: 30

“Whatever misfortune happens to you, it is because of the things your hands have brought, and for many (of them) He grants forgiveness.” (Al-Shura 42:30)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

To embody *Al-Salaam*, Muslims should strive to:

1. Find reassurance in Allah’s remembrance.

((أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ)) الرعد: 28

“Without a doubt, by the mention of Allah’s name, the hearts feel secure” (Al-Raad 13:28)

2. Maintain pure hearts free of malice and envy.

((يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ)) الشعراء:

89

“At that day neither wealth nor progeny shall be of benefit, except one who comes to Allah with a pure heart.” (Al-Shuara 26:88-89)

3. Act in peace, ensuring their actions align with Allah’s guidance.
4. Be sources of peace and security for others, as defined by the Prophet (PBUH):

عن أبو هريرة ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ "المسلم من سلم الناس من لسانه
ويده، والمؤمن من أمنه الناس على دمائهم وأموالهم" . [الترمذي
والنسائي وأحمد]

**"The Muslim is the one from whom people are safe
from his tongue and his hand and the believer is
the one people trust their lives and wealth".
(Tirmidhi)**

Al-Mu'min (المؤمن) - The Inspirer of Faith, the faithful, the Believer

Allah's name "Al-Mu'min" appears once in the Quran, in Surah Al-Hashr:

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)) الحشر:

23

“He is Allah, there is no god but He, the King, the Holy, the Peace, the Inspirer of faith, the Guardian, the Eminent, the Compeller, the Proud, glory to Allah above the partners they attribute to Him.” (Al-Hashr 59:23)

Scholars have offered several translations of "Al-Mu'min" (المؤمن), including "the Inspirer of Faith," "the Infuser of Faith," "the Giver of Faith," "the Guardian of Faith," "the Keeper of Faith," and "the Supreme Believer." Translating this name presents a challenge because "Mu'min" (مؤمن) is also used to refer to a good Muslim, or "believer." Thus, the simplest translation for "Al-Mu'min" could be "The Believer." However, one might ask: What does Allah believe in?

Since "Al-Mu'min" appears only once in the Quran, we turn to Arabic lexicons to explore its root meaning. Derived from the root [أ م ن] "Amena," it means to trust, believe, and provide security. Examples of words derived from this root include:

((وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَادِقِينَ)) يوسف:17

“And you will not believe us even if we are truthful”. (Yusuf 12:17)

((الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَأَمَّنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ)) فُرَيْش:4

“He is the one who fed them after being hungry and gave them security after being fearful”.
(Quraish 106:4)

((وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بَدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا)) آلِ عِمْرَانَ:75

“Among the People of the Book are some who, if entrusted with a ton of gold, will (readily) pay it back; others, who if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you keep demanding it.” (Al-Emran 3:75)

((وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُؤْمِنٌ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمَانَهُ أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَنْ يَقُولَ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ)) عَافِر:28

“And said a believer, a man from among the people of Pharaoh, who had concealed his belief, “Will you kill a man because he says `My Lord is Allah’?”
(Ghafer 40:28)

When the name Al-Mu'min (المؤمن) applied to Allah, it embodies three meanings:

1. Allah's Absolute Self-Belief

Allah fully knows His power and authority and affirms all His glorious attributes. In Surah Al-Imran, Allah testifies to His own divinity:

((شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ)) آلِ عِمْرَانَ: 18

"Allah testifies that there is no god but He." (Al-Emran 3:18)

Unlike human beings, who may overestimate their abilities, Allah is fully aware of His omnipotence, never making a commitment beyond His capacity. Obviously, nothing is difficult for Allah. This is evident in verses like:

((وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا)) فاطر: 44

"There is nothing in the heavens or on earth that is difficult for Allah." (Fatir 35:44)

((وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا)) الفتح: 21

"Allah is always able to do everything." (Al-Fath 48:21)

2. Allah's Belief in His Messengers and Their Message

Allah expresses His belief in the truthfulness of the message revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

((لَكِنِ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا)) النساء: 166

"Allah bears witness that what He has sent down to you (Muhammad), He has sent with His (Own full) Knowledge and the angels bear witness: though Allah suffices as a Witness" (Al-Nisa 4:166).

This implies that every promise within Allah's revelations is true, as Allah will fulfill it. Examples include:

((وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا)) النَّسَاء:122

"Allah's promise is the truth, and whose word can be truer than Allah's?" (Al-Nisa 4:122)

((وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ)) الرَّوم:6

"The promise is from Allah, and Allah never fails to fulfill His promise." (Al-Rum 30:6)

Therefore, "Al-Mu'min" means that Allah is committed to every statement and promise conveyed by His messengers.

3. Allah as the Provider of Security

As Al-Mu'min, Allah is the source of security, granting safety and protection. His creations are meticulously designed to ensure safety and stability. Consider, for instance, the fixed properties of matter—if these were variable, safety would be impossible to maintain. Likewise, the stability of celestial bodies allows life to thrive on Earth. Even within our own bodies, Allah has embedded senses and responses that keep us aware of dangers.

When Allah instills fear in people's hearts, it often serves to guide them away from worldly temptations and toward eternal security.

Manifestations of Al-Mu'min in the Character of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) embodied the attributes of Al-Mu'min. He believed in his role as the Seal of the Prophets and remained a source of security and peace for both Muslims and non-Muslims. His teachings emphasized safety and justice for all, as seen in his sayings:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: "مَنْ قَتَلَ مُعَاهِدًا لَمْ يَرِحْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ رِيحَهَا لَيُوجَدُ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ أَرْبَعِينَ عَامًا". [أَخْرَجَهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ].

“Whoever kill a Mu’ahad (non-Muslim citizen and any person under a treaty) will never smell the fragrance of Paradise, though its fragrance can be found at a distance of forty years (of travel).

عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: "أَلَا مَنْ ظَلَمَ مُعَاهِدًا أَوْ انْتَقَصَهُ أَوْ كَلَفَهُ فَوْقَ طَاقَتِهِ أَوْ أَخَذَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا بَغَيْرِ طَيْبِ نَفْسٍ: فَأَنَا حَجِيْبُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ" (رواه أبو داود)

“Indeed, whoever wrongs a Mu’ahad (non-Muslim citizen and any person under a treaty) or violates his right or burdens him with work beyond his capabilities, or takes something from him without permission, I shall be his advocate on the day of Judgment.” (Abu Daoud)

Despite his superior status, the Prophet was known for his humility. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : " أَنَا سَيِّدُ وُلْدِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَوَّلُ مَنْ يَنْسَقُ عَنْهُ الْقَبْرُ وَأَوَّلُ شَافِعٍ وَأَوَّلُ مُشَفِّعٍ " رواه مسلم

"I am the master of the children of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, and I will be the first to intercede, and it is no boast." (Muslim)

Yet, he was accessible to his companions, and strangers often couldn't distinguish him from others due to his humility.

Once, a man came to the Prophet (PBUH) shaking with fear. Upon seeing him the Prophet (PBUH) smiled and comforted him, saying:

عن قيس بن أبي حازم : أن رجلاً أتى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقام بين يديه فأخذه رعدة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "هَوْنٌ عليك فإني لست بملك ، إنما أنا ابن امرأة من قريش كانت تأكل القديد". [سنن ابن ماجه]

**"Be at ease. I am not a king, but I am the son of a woman from Quraish who used to eat dried meat."
[Ibn MAjah]**

Both Abu Dhar and Abu Hurairah said:

عن أبي ذرٍّ وأبي هريرة رضي الله عنهما قالا: "كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يجلس بين ظهري أصحابه فيجيء الغريب فلا يدري أيُّهم هو حتى يسأل" [أبو داود في سننه]

"The Prophet would sit with his companions in any vacant spot, So, when a stranger come would not distinguish him until he asks, "Which one of you is the Prophet?" (Abu Dawud)

The Prophet (PBUH) prohibited his companions from standing up when he enters their gathering and said: "من أحب أن يتمثل له الرجال قياماً فليتبوأ مقعده من النار" [رواه أحمد والترمذي و أبو داود].

“Let him who likes people to stand up before him prepare his place in Hell.” [Abu-Dawud]

Elements to Adopt in our Character

We should have deep conviction that Allah, Al-Mu'min (المؤمن), is our fortress, providing us with safety and security. This belief should manifest in us through two key attributes

- 1.** You must believe in yourself as Allah’s representative, His Khalifa, placed on this earth to fulfill His purpose. Therefore, the actions of a Mu’min must align with their words. It is unfitting for a Mu’min to have a personality divided between an inner character and an outward appearance. A true Mu’min does not present a facade of piety while harboring envy or hatred in their heart.
- 2.** A Mu’min must also be a source of security and peace for those around them. A Mu’min is someone from whom all creatures feel safe and whom every person in fear can look to for help. A Mu’min is trustworthy in words, promises, and actions. Deception, trickery, and lies have no place in their character. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن أبي هريرة: أن النبي ﷺ قال: "والله لا يؤمن، والله لا يؤمن، والله لا يؤمن،
والله لا يؤمن." قيل: "من يا رسول الله؟" قال: "الذي لا يأمن جاره
بوائقه" [مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ]

“By Allah, he does not believe; by Allah, he does not believe; by Allah, he does not believe.” When asked,

“Who is that, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied, “The one whose neighbor is not safe from his harm.”

This is why Allah, in the Qur'an, consistently mentions that those who believe must also perform righteous deeds، **إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ**، Faith alone is incomplete without actions that reflect it.

Al-Muhaymin (المهيمن) - The Guardian

The name Al-Muhaymin appears in the Qur'an once, in Surah Al-Hashr (59:23)

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ
الْمُهَيِّمُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)) الحشر:

23

“He is Allah, there is no god but He; the Absolute Ruler, the Pure One, the Source of Peace, the Inspirer of Faith, the Guardian, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Greatest; Glory to Allah! above the partners they attribute to Him.” (Al-Hashr 59:23)

The name Al-Muhaymin signifies Allah's supreme authority and care over all His creation. It reflects His ability to oversee, protect, and control every aspect of life, including sustenance, actions, and the moment of death. Al-Muhaymin is the One who has complete command over every situation. This divine attribute encompasses three key aspects:

1. Allah's Perfect Knowledge

Allah has absolute knowledge of all things—both seen and unseen, whether they are public or secret, present or future. Allah says in the Qur'an:

((أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ))

التوبة: 78

"Do they not know that Allah knows their secret thoughts and their secret counsels, and that Allah is the All-Knowing of all things unseen?" (At-Tawbah 9:78)

((وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يُعَلِّمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ)) الأنعام: 59

"With Him are the keys of the unseen, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever is in the earth and the sea. Not a leaf falls without His knowledge, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry but is inscribed in a clear record." (Al-An'am 6:59)

2. Allah's Infinite Power

Allah has absolute control over everything and is omnipresent.

((وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)) آل

عمران: 189

"To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and Allah has power over all things." (Al-Imran 3:189)

3. Allah's Knowledge and Power are Eternal

Unlike human beings, Allah's knowledge and power are constant and unchanging. He is not bound by time and space as we are. However, unlike human rulers who may use power for selfish purposes, Allah's infinite power manifests through His mercy, kindness, and love, never through arrogance or vengeance.

On one occasion, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) saw a woman lovingly embracing her child. He asked his companions: "Can you ever imagine this woman throwing her child into the fire?"

They replied, "No."

The Prophet (PBUH) then said: "By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, Allah is more merciful to His servants than this mother is to her child."

Allah, The Ultimate Guardian

Allah is *Al-Muhaymin*, the Supreme Guardian, as demonstrated in numerous instances throughout history:

- He protected Prophet Musa (Moses) from Pharaoh and his army.
- He saved Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) from the fire.
- He rescued Prophet Yunus (Jonah) from the belly of the whale.
- He safeguarded Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from the many conspiracies plotted against him.

Recognizing that Allah is Al-Muhaymin should instill confidence and trust that He will always protect and support His believers. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was assured of this divine guardianship even during the most challenging moments. During the Battle of the Trench, when the Muslims faced a dire threat from all the allied tribes of Arabia, the Prophet (PBUH) confidently promised his companions victory over the Roman and Persian empires. The hypocrites, who lacked faith in Al-Muhaymin, mockingly questioned: "How can Muhammad promise us victory over Caesar and Persia when none of us even feels safe enough to relieve himself?"

But Al-Muhaymin was in full control. Without the Muslims engaging in battle, Allah defeated the

Confederates, proving His divine power. Allah affirms in the Qur'an:

((وَ لِلّٰهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا)) الفتح: 7
"To Allah belongs the forces of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom."(Surah Al-Fath 48:7)

((وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ)) المذثر: 31
"No one knows the forces of your Lord except Him." (Surah Al-Muddathir 74:31)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

By understanding that Allah is *Al-Muhaymin*, you should have absolute certainty that every statement in the Qur'an is true, and that every promise made by Allah will be fulfilled.

The attribute of *Al-Muhaymin* also holds practical implications for believers, guiding them in their relationship with Allah. This involves four key elements:

1. Knowing that Allah is *Al-Muhaymin*, you must fill your heart with His remembrance, ensuring that it is attentive to none but Him and fears no one but Him.
2. Knowing that Allah is *Al-Muhaymin*, you must seek knowledge to cleanse your heart from spiritual diseases, your mind from falsehood, and your senses from engaging in disobedience.
3. Always remember that Allah knows everything about your thoughts and actions.

4. This awareness should instill a sense of humility and accountability, preventing you from contemplating disobedience.
5. If you fall into sin, you should immediately seek repentance, knowing that Allah is aware of all that you do.
6. Since Allah controls everything, you should place full trust in Him.
7. Have faith in a bright future and the certainty of ultimate success, as long as you remain steadfast in His obedience.

By embodying these principles, a believer can align themselves with the meaning of *Al-Muhaymin*, strengthening their faith and deepening their connection with Allah.

Al-Aziz (العزیز) - The Victorious, the Eminent

The name Al-Aziz appears 88 times in the Qur'an. Among these occurrences:

- 56 times (64%) it is paired with Al-Hakeem (The Wise),
- 7 times with Al-Qawi (The Powerful),
- 5 times each with Al-Raheem (The Merciful), Al-Aleem (The All-Knowing), and Al-Ghafour (The Forgiving).

This pairing highlights that Allah, *Al-Aziz*, is the absolute controller and provider of honor, power, and strength, bestowing them with wisdom, knowledge, and mercy.

The name Al-Aziz is derived from a root that conveys rarity and great value.

- Something rare but without value is not called Aziz.
- Something valuable but not rare is also not called Aziz.

Since Allah is absolutely unique—unparalleled in existence—and of supreme value, He is rightfully Al-Aziz.

Additionally, Al-Aziz comes from a root meaning to always be victorious. It also denotes winning an argument in disputes, as referenced in Surah Sad:

((إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي لَهُ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَلِيَ نَعْجَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَقَالَ أَكْفِلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ)) ص: 23

"This man is my brother: he has nine and ninety ewes, and I have (but) one: yet he says, `Commit

her to my care,' and he overpowered me in speech." (38:23)

Another meaning of Al-Aziz is to strengthen. Allah uses this meaning in Surah Yasin, referring to the reinforcement of two messengers with a third:

((إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ)). يس: 14

"When We (first) sent to them two Messengers, they rejected them: so, We strengthened them with a third." (36:14)

The name *Al-Aziz* encompasses four key attributes:

1. Uniqueness – There is None Like Him, Allah is one and unmatched in His existence and attributes

((قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (1) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ (2) لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ (3) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ..)) الإخلاص: 1-4

"Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; (1) Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; (2) He begets not, nor is He begotten; (3) And there is none like unto Him." (Al-Ikhlās 112:1-4)

2. Absolute Importance – All Creation Depends on Him. Every being in existence is in desperate need of Allah.

((اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ)) آل عمران: 2

"Allah! There is no god but He, the Living, the Sustainer of all things." (Al-Imran 3:2)

3. Supreme Power and Inevitable Victory. Allah holds full control over everything, and whatever He decrees will inevitably come to pass.

((وَاللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ))

يوسف: 21

**"And Allah has full power and control over His affairs; but most among mankind do not know."
(Yusuf 12:21)**

4. The Source of Honor and Power: Allah is the only true source of eminence and power. He grants it to whomever He wills and takes it away from whomever He wills.

((مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا)) فاطر: 10

"If any seek honor and power, let them know that all honor and power belong to Allah."(Fatir 35:10)

((قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)) آلِ عِمْرَانَ: 26

"Say: 'O Allah! Lord of Power and Rule, You give power to whom You please, and You strip power from whom You please. You bestow honor on whom You please, and You bring disgrace to whom You please. In Your hand is all good. Truly, You have power over all things.'"(Al-Imran 3:26)

((الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَيْبَتُّغُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا)) النساء: 139

"To those who take unbelievers as their supporters instead of the believers—do they seek honor among them? But all honor belongs to Allah."(An-Nisa 4:139)

((وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
((الْمُنَافِقُونَ:8

"To Allah, His Messenger, and the believers belong all honor, but the hypocrites do not know."(Al-Munafiqun 63:8)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

By understanding Allah's name *Al-Aziz*, a Muslim should strive to reflect its meaning in their daily life in five main ways:

1. Recognizing That All Power, Honor, and Dignity Belong to Allah Alone

Recognizing that true power and honor come from Allah alone. No one else has the ability to affect your life without His will. Therefore, you should always carry yourself with dignity and never humiliate or degrade yourself before anyone.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: **"Seek what you want with dignity, for all matters are fulfilled by Allah's will."** He also warned: **"Whoever humbles himself before a rich man (merely due to his wealth) has lost a third of his religion."**

It should be emphasized that when Allah's greatness is firmly established in a person's heart, everything else in this world appears insignificant in their eyes.

2. Being Conscious of Allah and His Commands

Since Allah is the source of all eminence, you should always remain mindful of Him and His guidance. Never underestimate any sin, for the seriousness of a sin is not in its nature but in the One whom you have disobeyed. It is contradictory to claim knowledge of Allah while disobeying Him. True faith in Allah is settled in the heart, expressed by the tongue, and reflected in actions. The Prophet (PBUH) said: **“It is enough knowledge for a man to fear Allah, and it is enough ignorance for a man to be proud of what he knows.”**

3. Avoiding Arrogance and Boastfulness

Since *Al-Aziz* is the One who grants honor, you should rid your heart of arrogance and pride. The same way Allah gives you blessings and status, He can take them away. Despite his esteemed position, the Prophet (PBUH) remained the epitome of humility. Once, a slave who met him was overwhelmed and began to tremble. The Prophet (PBUH) reassured him: **“Calm yourself, I am only the son of a woman from Quraysh who used to eat dried bread in Mecca.”**

4. Seeking Honor Through Obedience to Allah

If you wish to be *Aziz* (honorable and respected), dedicate yourself to Allah’s obedience. Whatever you sacrifice for the sake of Allah, He will compensate you with something far greater in both this life and the Hereafter. If you glorify Allah’s commands, He will glorify you. But if you ignore His commands, He will leave you to your own downfall. Allah states in the Qur’an:

((وَمَنْ يُهِنِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ مُكْرِمٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ)) الحج: 18
“Whomever Allah disgraces, no one can grant honor to: for Allah does whatever He wills.” (Al-Hajj 22:18)

5. Striving to Embody the Qualities of *Al-Aziz*

To reflect Allah’s attribute of *Al-Aziz*, work on developing a character that earns respect and admiration from others. This is not through arrogance but through virtues such as morality, wisdom, knowledge, kindness, mercy, and tolerance. Additionally, treat all people with honor and respect, as Allah has honored all of humanity through His creation. Only Allah has the authority to disgrace someone, and He does so as a means of guiding them back to the right path.

By embodying these principles, a believer can attain true honor and dignity in the sight of *Al-Aziz*, the One who grants and withholds power according to His wisdom.

Al-Jabbar (الجبار) - The Compeller

The name *Al-Jabbar* appears once in the Qur'an, in Surah *Al-Hashr* (59:23).

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ)) الحشر:

23

“He is Allah, there is no god but He; the Absolute Ruler, the Pure One, the Source of Peace, the Inspirer of Faith, the Guardian, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Greatest; Glory to Allah! above the partners they attribute to Him.” (Al-Hashr 59:23)

This divine name encompasses three key attributes:

1. The One Who is Beyond Reach: The name *Al-Jabbar* comes from a root that signifies someone so exalted that cannot be reached. Allah is *Al-Jabbar* because He is far beyond human perception—eyes cannot see Him, and thoughts cannot fully comprehend Him.

((لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ)) الأنعام: 103

“No vision can comprehend Him not, but He comprehends (all) visions. (Al-Anaam 6:103)

2. The One Who Mends and Restores: The root of *Al-Jabbar* is also used to describe the act of fixing what is broken, much like a healer who sets fractured bones so they can heal correctly. Allah is *Al-Jabbar* because He:
 - Straightens what is crooked,

- Eliminates injustice,
 - Breaks the power of oppressors,
 - Supports the weak and the oppressed.
3. The One Who Compels and Enforces His Will: *Al-Jabbar* also signifies the One whose will is irresistible—He compels all creations to submit to His divine decree. In a Hadith Qudsi, Allah says: “You desire, and I desire. If you accept what I desire, I will grant you what you desire. But if you resist My will, I will make it difficult for you to attain what you desire, and in the end, only My will shall prevail.” An example of this divine compulsion is Pharaoh. He sought to prevent the rise of a challenger by killing the male children of Banu Israel. Yet, Allah compelled him to unknowingly raise the very child—Musa (AS)—who would bring about his downfall.

Elements to Adopt in our Character

Understanding *Al-Jabbar* should inspire us to embody four key qualities:

1. **Rely Solely on Allah for Help:** Do not place your trust in anyone else. True support comes only from *Al-Jabbar*.
2. **Never Commit Injustice:** Do not oppress others, for *Al-Jabbar* will come to their aid and stand against you.
3. **Uphold Justice and Support the Weak:** Be proactive in defending the rights of the oppressed and helping those in need.

4. **Elevate Your Character:** Strive for such honesty and righteousness that others naturally respect and look up to you.

By embracing these lessons, we align ourselves with the divine attribute of Al-Jabbar—seeking justice, standing firm in righteousness, and trusting in Allah’s ultimate authority over all things.

***Al-Mutakabbir* (المتكبر) - The Greatest, The Supreme**

The name *Al-Mutakabbir* appears in the Qur'an in Surah *Al-Hashr* (59:23):

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، الْمَلِكُ، الْقُدُّوسُ، السَّلَامُ، الْمُؤْمِنُ،
الْمُهَيِّمُ، الْعَزِيزُ، الْجَبَّارُ، الْمُتَكَبِّرُ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ))
الحشر: 23

“He is Allah, there is no god but He; the Absolute Ruler, the Pure One, the Source of Peace, the Inspirer of Faith, the Guardian, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Greatest: Glory to Allah! above the partners they attribute to Him.” (Al-Hashr 59:23)

Al-Mutakabbir is the One who possesses absolute greatness and considers everything else insignificant in comparison to Himself. His majesty is unmatched, and He views all creation as a king looks upon his subjects—with absolute superiority. However, there is a distinction:

- If someone rightfully claims greatness, it is a sign of true supremacy.
- If someone falsely claims superiority, it is nothing but arrogance, which is despicable and condemned.

The name *Al-Mutakabbir* is an emphatic form that denotes actively exercising rights, privileges, and authority that are exclusive to Him and above the rights of all creation.

While humans can never fully comprehend Allah, He provides parables in the Quran to help us grasp His attributes:

ضَرَبَ لَكُمْ مَثَلًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ هَلْ لَكُمْ مِنْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ شُرَكَاءَ فِي مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ فَأَنْتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

“He gives you a similitude from your own (experience): do you have partners among those whom your right hands possess; to share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you? Do you fear them as you fear each other? Thus, do We explain the Signs in detail to people who understand. “(Ar-Room 30:28)

To illustrate this further:

- If an ignorant person claims to be knowledgeable, it exposes their weakness. But if a true scholar proclaims their knowledge to help others learn, it signifies their perfection.
- If a coward claims to be brave, it is false pride. But if a genuinely courageous person asserts their bravery to offer protection, it is a noble trait.

Similarly, when Allah declares His greatness, it is an attribute of absolute perfection. But when humans claim superiority over others, it is a sign of imperfection and arrogance.

This divine name Al-Mutakabbir encompasses five essential meanings:

1. Absolute Greatness: Allah sees everything as small in relation to Himself. His greatness is beyond measure.

2. Infinite Authority: Allah is the eternal King whose dominion over the universe will never diminish. He has absolute control over all things and complete knowledge of every detail within His creation.
3. Immunity from External Influence: Nothing can influence Allah, making His justice absolute. Since His kingdom is infinite, no one can harm Him, and thus, His forgiveness is limitless.
4. Absolute Will: Allah's will is unchangeable. No force can persuade Him otherwise. Whatever He decrees comes to pass, and no one can overrule His decisions.
5. Ultimate Perfection: Allah is completely free from any flaws or weaknesses. This attribute is closely linked to *Al-Quddus* (The Most Pure).

For any human to claim these attributes for themselves is false, arrogant, and detestable. This is why Allah condemns those who seek *Kibriyaa'* (كبرياء', self-glorification). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) warned:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم "لا يدخل النار أحد في قلبه مثقال حبة خردل من إيمان ولا يدخل الجنة أحد في قلبه مثقال حبة خردل من كبرياء." (صحيح مسلم)

"No one will enter Paradise if he has even an atom's weight of arrogance in their heart, and no one will enter Hell if they have even an atom's weight of faith in their heart." (Muslim)

Furthermore, Allah states in a Qudsi Hadith:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال الله عز وجل "الكبرياء رداي والعظمة إزاري فمن نازعني واحدا منهما قذفته في النار." (صحيح مسلم وأخرجه الإمام أحمد وأبو داود وابن ماجه وابن حبان)

"Pride (Kibriyaa') is My garment, and Greatness is My cloak. Whoever tries to claim them, I will cast them into Hell." (Muslim)

Arrogance destroys the very essence of servitude to Allah. A true servant must be humble before their Master. Therefore:

- Humility is rewarded with Paradise.
- Arrogance is punished with Hell.

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : "من تواضع لله درجة رفعه الله درجة حتى يجعله في عليين ومن تكبر على الله درجة وضعه الله درجة حتى يجعله في أسفل السافلين." (مسند أحمد)

"Whoever humbles himself for Allah, He will elevate his rank until he reaches the highest levels of Paradise. But whoever exalts himself in arrogance, Allah will lower their rank until they become the lowest of the low (in Hellfire)."
(Ahmad)

The attribute Al-Mutakabbir belongs exclusively to Allah. Allah does not love the arrogant.

- Almost always, Allah humiliates the arrogant, bringing them to ruin.
- Just as rain does not gather on high mountains but collects in valleys, Allah's blessings and

mercy descend upon those who humble themselves before Him.

The first being to show arrogance was Satan. He refused to bow to Adam (AS), claiming superiority:

((أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِن طِينٍ)) الأعراف: 12

"I am better than him! You created me from fire, and You created him from clay!" (Al-A'raf 7:12)

Likewise, those who follow in Satan's footsteps—believing that their intelligence, wealth, power, or status make them superior—fail to recognize that all blessings come from Allah alone. Despite his unmatched status, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was the model of humility. After the conquest of Mecca, a man approached him, overwhelmed with awe. Seeing this, the Prophet (PBUH) reassured him:

أتى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم رجل فكلمه فجعل ترعد فرائضه فقال له: " هون عليك فيني لست بملك إنما أنا ابن امرأة تأكل القديد. " (سنن ابن ماجه)

"O my brother, do not be intimidated. I am not a king. I am just the son of a woman from Quraysh who used to eat dried bread." (Sunan Ibn Majah)

The name Al-Mutakabbir should remind us of Allah's incomparable greatness and our own insignificance.

- Think of our beginning: A tiny, insignificant drop of fluid.
- Think of our end: A lifeless corpse that even our loved ones cannot bear to keep.
- Think of our resting place: A dark, six-foot grave covered with dirt.

How can a human, who is so weak and temporary, ever be arrogant before Al-Mutakabbir, the Supreme? True greatness belongs to Allah alone. The wise person is the one who humbles himself before the Creator, for in humility lies the path to honor, blessings, and Paradise.

Elements to Adopt in our Character

There are five ways that we can realize the divine attribute, Al-Mutakabbir, in our life:

1. Acknowledge our lowly nature compared to the greatness of Allah, Al-Mutakabbir. This should impact us in three ways:

a) Our egotism and pride will be diminished and replaced by humility and genuine obedience, service and worship of the true Al-Mutakabbir, Allah; in return, Al-Mutakabbir, will reward us with true greatness and honor.

b) We will gain true freedom from fear of and servitude to anyone other than Allah. While we will not belittle anyone, we will become immune to being belittled.

c) We become aware that our dignity is elevated by how humble we are toward Allah and his creations.

2. Work hard to maximize our potential and influence, while remembering that the gifts we acquire and the opportunities we have are presented to us by Allah.

3. Develop Immunity against being unjust when provoked and free ourselves from whatever distracts our hearts from truth and obedience to Allah.
4. Have full control over our desires and passions and align our will with Allah's will.
5. Purify ourselves from all imperfection or weaknesses.

Al-Khaliq (الخالق) - The Creator

The names of Allah — Al-Khaliq (The Creator), Al-Bari' (The Producer), and Al-Musawwir (The Fashioner) — appear together only once in the Qur'an, in Surat Al-Hashr:

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِيُّ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)) الحشر: 24

“He is Allah, the Creator, the Producer, the Fashioner. To Him belong the most beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.” (Al-Hashr 59:24)

Though these names appear in other forms elsewhere in the Qur'an, they are mentioned together as definite names only in this verse.

These three names share close meanings and are considered near synonyms. In Arabic, when near-synonyms appear individually, each can represent the broader meaning of the others. However, when listed together, the subtle distinctions between them must be considered. This is a known linguistic rule.

For example, Allah says:

((إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ ...)) التوبة: 60
“Charity is for the poor and the needy ...” (Al-Tawba 9:60)

Although the poor and the needy are similar, their distinction is necessary here because they are

mentioned together. The poor refers to those in extreme need — for instance, someone earning 5 while needing 10. The needy refers to those with slight deficiency, someone earning 90 but needing 100.

However, when only one of these terms appears, it can imply both categories. For example:

((إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ...)) البقرة: 271

“If you openly give the charity, it is good, and if you keep it secret and give it to the poor, it is better for you.” (Al-Baqarah 2:271) - Here, the poor includes the needy.

((يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلَّوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ)) البقرة: 215

“They ask you what they should spend (in charity). Say: Whatever good you spend is for the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the needy and wayfarers.” (Al-Baqarah 2:215) - Here, the needy includes the poor.

Similarly, since Al-Khaliq (الخالق), Al-Bari' (البارئ) and Al-Musawwir (المصور) are mentioned together, each name carries a distinct shade of meaning that should be appreciated:

- Al-Khaliq (The Creator): Refers to bringing something into existence from nothing.
- Al-Bari' (The Producer): Indicates creating with precision according to a preordained plan.
- Al-Musawwir (The Fashioner): Refers to shaping and giving form and features.

This distinction is supported by Surah Al-A'raf:

((وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ))

الأعراف: 11

“We created you, then shaped you, then said to the angels: Prostrate before Adam...” (Al-Araf 7:11)

Here, creation (khalq) precedes shaping (tasweer), reflecting the difference between the two stages.

Likewise, in Surah Al-Hadid (57:22):

((مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا)) الحديد: 22

“No disaster strikes the earth or yourselves but it is in a Book before We bring it into being (نَبْرَأَهَا).” (Al-Hadid 57:22)

The verb nabra’uha — derived from Al-Bari’ — emphasizes the execution of what was prewritten, showing the precision of the creative process.

Although Allah’s attributes are beyond human comparison, relatable examples help clarify the concepts — as the Qur’an itself uses such examples. For instance, to explain the illogical nature of associating partners with Allah, He says in Surah Ar-Rum):

((صَرَبَ لَكُمْ مَثَلًا مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ هَلْ لَكُمْ مِنْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ شُرَكَاءَ فِي مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ فَأَنْتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ)) الروم: 28

“He gives you an example from yourselves: Do you have among those you own partners in the wealth We have provided for you, equal with you? Do you fear them as you fear each other? This is to explain the Signs to people who understand.” (Al-Room 30:28)

In human practice, everything we create follows three essential stages: planning, construction, and refinement. For example, building a structure involves:

1. Hiring an architect to develop the design and plans.
2. Contracting a construction company to build according to the plans.
3. Engaging an interior designer to add finishing touches and unique features.

Each stage requires experts who rely on accumulated knowledge — past designs, construction methods, material science, codes, and analytical tools — to complete the project successfully.

In contrast, for the universe, Allah alone is the Creator of the materials, the Planner, the Designer, the Builder, and the Perfecter. When Allah creates, His divine names — Al-Khaliq (The Creator/Planner), Al-Bari' (The Producer/Constructor), and Al-Musawwir (The Fashioner/Decorator) — are all manifested.

Muslims are commanded to study both Allah's revealed words (the Qur'an) and His observed creation (the universe and themselves). Through this reflection, believers witness every stage of creation — from raw materials, to design, to construction, to beauty and perfection. This deep understanding leads to truly knowing Allah. Without such study, Allah may remain an abstract concept, easily shaken by doubts or Satan's whispers.

Since Allah cannot be seen, as He says:

((لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ))

الأنعام: 103

No vision can comprehend Him, but He comprehends all visions. He is the Subtle, the All-Aware". (Al-An'am 6:103)

We come to know Him by reflecting on His creation — just as we recognize a person's genius through their work, even if we never meet them. This is why the Qur'an repeatedly calls attention to the beauty and precision of Allah's creation. For example, Allah says:

((خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا وَالْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ (١٠) هَذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ بَلِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ)) لقمان: 10-11

"He created the heavens without pillars that you see, placed mountains on the earth so it would not shake with you, and spread throughout it all kinds of creatures. And We send down rain from the sky, causing every noble kind (of plant) to grow. (10) This is the creation of Allah. So, show Me what those besides Him have created. Indeed, the wrongdoers are in clear error." (Luqman 31:10-11)

In Islam, there is no division between "religious" and "secular" sciences. Fields such as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, earth sciences, and history are considered part of divine knowledge. Studying them is not only encouraged but praised by Allah, as it leads to true understanding and recognition of Him. Allah says:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَآخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ (١٩٠) الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا
سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ [آل عمران]

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day are signs for those of understanding. (190) They remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying down, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, saying, ‘Our Lord, You did not create all of this without purpose. Glory be to You, protect us from the punishment of the Fire.’” (Al-Emran 3:190-191)

And He says:

((أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُخْتَلِفًا
الْوَانُهَا وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيْضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ
(27) وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالدَّوَابِّ وَأَلْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا
يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ)) فاطر: 27-28

“Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, producing fruits of different colors? And in the mountains are streaks of white, red, and black of varying shades. (27) Likewise, among people, animals, and cattle are those of different colors. Only those with knowledge (scientists) truly fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Mighty and Forgiving.” (Fater 35:27-28) (Fater 35:27-28)

Note: In this verse, proper understanding of Arabic grammar is essential. The word **الله** (Allah) is the object (marked with fatha), and **الْعُلَمَاءُ** (the scientists) is the subject (marked with damma). Thus, the correct meaning is: “It is the scientists who truly fear Allah.” Reversing this would distort the meaning entirely, implying Allah fears the scientists — which is a grave error.

Allah commands believers to study the universe and their own creation:

((وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ (٢٠) وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ))
الذَّارِيَّات: 20-21

“And on the earth are signs for those with certainty of faith — and in yourselves. Will you not then see?” (Al-Dhariyat 51:20-21)

((أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ (19) قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ..)) العنكبوت:
20-19

“Have they not seen how Allah originates creation, then will reproduce it? Surely, that is easy for Allah. (19) Say: Travel through the land and observe how He began creation. Then Allah will bring forth the next creation. Indeed, Allah is capable of all things.” (Al-Ankabout 29:19-20)

((الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ (3) ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ حَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ)) الملك: 3-4

“He is the One who created the seven heavens, one above the other. You will not see any inconsistency in the creation of Al-Rahman. So look again: do you see any flaws? Then look again and yet again — your gaze will return to you humbled and weary.” (Al-Mulk 67:3-4)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

Allah's name Al-Khaliq (The Creator) should remind us of His greatness and our limited power and knowledge. There are five key ways to embody elements of this divine attribute in our lives:

1. **Pursue knowledge through studying Allah's creation.**

Reflecting on the natural world leads to understanding Allah. Scientific advancements — submarines inspired by fish, planes by birds, navigation by migratory animals, and medical breakthroughs through studying the human body — all trace back to His creation. Many discoveries still await us.

2. **Honor the perfection of Allah's creation.**

Avoid any actions that distort or disrespect the natural form and function Allah has perfected.

3. **Acknowledge and be grateful for how Allah created you.**

Recognize your unique beauty and the blessings of being served by other creations.

4. **Guard your belief from Satan's whispers.**

Knowing that Allah is the incomparable and eternal Creator — *“There is nothing like Him”* (أَلَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ) (Ash-Shura 42:11) — protects you from doubts. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عَنِ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ . قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
" يَا أَيُّ الشَّيْطَانِ أَحَدَكُمُ فَيَقُولُ مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا حَتَّى
يَقُولَ مَنْ خَلَقَ رَبَّكَ فَإِذَا بَلَغَهُ فَلْيَسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ ، وَلْيُنْتِهِ " . (صحيح
البخاري)

“Satan may come to one of you and ask, ‘Who created you?’ and you reply, ‘Allah.’ Then he continues: ‘Who created Allah?’ If this happens, seek refuge with Allah and abandon such thoughts.” (Bukhari)

Al-Bari' (البارئ) - The Producer, The Maker of Order

Allah's name Al-Bari' (البارئ) appears once in the Quran, in Surah Al-Hashr, alongside Al-Khaliq (الخالق) (the Creator) and Al-Musawwir (المصور) (The Fashioner):

((هو الله الخالق، البارئ، المصور، له الأسماء الحسنى، يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)) الحشر: 24
“He is Allah—the Creator, the Producer, the Fashioner. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.” (Al-Hashr 59:24)

In our earlier discussion on Al-Khāliq, we noted that although these three names all relate to creation, their specific mention together indicates distinct roles:

- Al-Khāliq: The Planner or Designer
- Al-Bāri': The Executor of the plan
- Al-Muṣawwir: The One who completes the form and detail

However, when any of these names appear alone, they encompass the entire process of creation. For example:

((مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا)) الحديد: 22
“No disaster strikes the earth or yourselves but it is in a Book before We bring it into being (نَبْرَأَهَا). Surely that is easy for Allah.” (Al-Hadid 57:22)

The verb (تَبَرَّأَهَا) is derived from Al-Bari' (البارئ) showing Allah's role in bringing a pre-planned event into reality — not by chance, but through divine order and causality.

In Surah Al-Baqarah (2:54), the word *Bārī'ikum* refers to Allah as the Creator in the comprehensive sense, encompassing the attributes of Al-Khāliq and Al-Muṣawwir:

((فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ)) البقرة: 54

“So turn in repentance to your Creator (Bārī'ikum)...” (Al-Baqara 2:54)

Linguistic Roots and Connotations

The root *b-r-*' carries several classical meanings:

- To bring into being something of value out of nothing
- To be free from fault or imperfection
- To cure or heal from illness
- To absolve from a claim
- To shape or sharpen

These meanings appear in common Arabic expressions like:

- *Barā'ah ikhtirā'* (patent) (براءة الاختراع),
- *Barī'* (innocent) (برئ)
- *Barā al-qalam* (sharpen the pen) (برى القلم)
- *Barā min al-maraḍ* (recovered from illness) (برأ من المرض)

Allah uses this root in Surah Al-Bayyina:

((إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ (6) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ)) البينة: 6-7

“Indeed, those who disbelieved from the People of the Book and the polytheists will be in Hellfire to dwell in it forever. They are the worst of [al-barīyah] creation. (6) But those who believed and did righteous deeds are the best of [al-barīyah] creation.” (Al-Bayyina 98:6-7)

Allah’s name Al-Bara’a (البارئ) implies the following key attributes:

1. Creating from Nothing and Without Precedent: Allah, Al-Bārī’, brings the elements of creation into existence from nothing. He created hydrogen and helium, from which all elements — including oxygen and water — were later formed. These were the building blocks for life, as stated:

((أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيًّا)) الأنبياء: 30

“Have The disbelievers not recognized that the heavens and the earth were one united piece, then We parted them? And We created every living thing from water. Will they not then believe?” (Al-Anbiyā’ 21:30)

((وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُونَ)) الروم: 20

“Among His signs is that He created you from dust, and now you are humans spreading around.” (Al-Rom 30:20)

2. Healer and Curer: Al-Bāri' is also the One who heals. Prophet Ibrahim (AS) said:

((وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ)) الشعراء: 80

“And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.” (Ash-Shu‘arā’ 26:80)

3. Protector Against Injustice: Allah, Al-Bāri', defends believers from the harm and claims of transgressors:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَدْفَعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ))
الحج: 38

“Surely, Allah defends those who believe. Indeed, Allah does not love anyone who is treacherous or ungrateful.” (Al-Hajj 22:38)

4. Purifier of Societies: Allah gives warnings before purging evil from societies. He purifies them only after ample warnings are ignored:

((بَرَاءَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ)) (التوبة: 1)

“Freedom from obligation is proclaimed from Allah and His Messenger toward those polytheists with whom you made treaties.” (At-Tawbah 9:1)

((مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى))
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَمَّا أُنذِرُوا مُّعْرِضُونَ)) (الأحقاف: 3)

“We did not create the heavens and the earth except in truth and for a specified term. Yet the disbelievers turn away from what they are warned of.” (Al-Aḥqāf 46:3)

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «لا شخصٌ أحبُّ إليه العذرُ من الله، من أجل ذلك بعث الله المرسلين، مبشِّرين ومُنذرين» (صحيح البخاري: ، و مسلم).

“No one loves to accept excuses more than Allah. That’s why He sent messengers with good news and warnings.”

5. Remover of Corruption When All Hope is Lost: When reform is no longer possible, Allah removes corrupt people entirely. This was the case with the people of Nuh (AS):

(وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا)) نوح: 26
“Nuh said: ‘My Lord, do not leave on the earth a single disbeliever. If You leave them, they will mislead Your slaves...’” (Nūḥ 71:26–27)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Study the Causes of Disasters: Since Allah, *Al-Bāri*, executes the divine plan when conditions are met, Muslims are encouraged to study natural causes — such as those leading to disasters — to anticipate and protect against their effects.
2. Strive for Excellence in Execution: When entrusted with implementing a plan, a Muslim should aim to follow the best procedures and choose the most suitable materials to ensure the plan is fulfilled with excellence.

3. Purify Yourself from Wrongdoing: A believer should actively cleanse himself from harmful habits and avoid relationships that lead to disobedience or tolerating evil.
4. Give Excuses and Advise Gently: Muslims should assume the best of others and offer advice before judgment. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq said:

روى البيهقي في شعب الإيمان عن جعفر الصادق رحمه الله قال: "إذا بلغك عن أخيك الشيء تُنكره فالتمس له عذرًا واحدًا إلى سبعين عذر، فإن أصبته وإلا قل: لعل له عذرٌ لا أعرفه."

“If you hear something unpleasant about your brother, make up to seventy excuses for him. If you can't, say: ‘Perhaps he has an excuse I don't know.’”

5. Remain Humble: Recognizing that we were created from soil should instill deep humility and prevent arrogance.
6. Be a Source of Healing: Since Allah is the Healer, Muslims should be grateful for His care and strive to be a source of comfort, healing, and support for others.

Al-Musawwir (المصور) - The Shaper of Beauty, the Fashioner

The name Al-Muṣawwir appears once in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Hashr alongside Al-Khāliq (The Creator) and Al-Bāri' (The Producer):

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِيُّ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)) الحشر: 24

“He is Allah, the Creator, the Producer, the Fashioner, o Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.” (Al-Hashr 59:24)

As previously discussed, while all three names relate to Allah’s power of creation, their mention together highlights distinct roles:

- Al-Khāliq: The Planner
- Al-Bāri’: The Executor
- Al-Muṣawwir: The One who gives unique shape, detail, and beauty to each creation

Allah says:

((وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ))
الأعراف:

“We have created you, then shaped you. Then We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam.’” (Al-Araf 7:11)

This verse implies that shaping (taṣwīr) follows creation (khalq), emphasizing the uniqueness and detailed design of each human being — unlike

animals, who often appear similar, even children from the same parents have distinct features.

Meaning of Al-Muṣawwir

The root ṣ-w-r (صَوَّرَ) conveys meanings such as:

- To shape, form, or sculpt
- To design or give image
- To imagine or visualize

Thus, Al-Muṣawwir is:

- The One who bestows form and structure
- The One who ensures harmony, balance, and perfection
- The One who gives each creation its uniqueness and special features

Allah affirms this in various verses:

((هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ)) آل عمران: 6

“He is the One who shapes you in the wombs as He wills. There is no God but He, the Almighty, the Wise” (Al-Imran 3:6)

((اللَّهُ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ
صُورَكُمْ)) غافر: 64

“Allah made the earth your resting place, the sky your canopy, and shaped you in the best form.” (Ghafer 40:64)

((خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَكُمْ ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ
الْمَصِيرُ)) التغابن: 3

““He created the heavens and the earth in perfect balance and shaped you beautifully and to Him is the final return.” (Al-Taghabun 64:3)

Allah’s attribute Al-Musawwir ensures the perfection of the creation as He said:

((الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَاوُتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ (3) ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ حَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ)) الملك: 3-4

“He is Who has created the seven heavens one above the other, you can see nothing out of proportion in the creation of the Rahman. Then look again: "Can you see any flaws?" (3) Then look again and yet again, your sight will return to you abased and in a state of weariness.” (Al-Mulk 67:3-4)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Appreciate Beauty in Creation: Reflect on the beauty around you — birds, flowers, mountains, lakes, fruits — and thank Allah for the pleasure of experiencing it. Respect all of His creation and see diversity as a reflection of Al-Musawwir’s artistry.
2. Be Content with Your Appearance: Allah created you in the best form. Trust His wisdom and avoid envy or dissatisfaction. Remember: if we were as beautiful as Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), we might not bear the trials he faced.

3. Look Beyond the Mirror: When you see yourself in the mirror, thank Allah for your form, but also examine your character and ask Allah to beautify your inner self just as He has your outer appearance.
4. Live Up to Your Potential: Allah says:

((لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ)) التين: 4

“Indeed, We created the human being in the best of forms.” (At-Tin 95:4)

Use your intellect, body, and skills wisely. Strive for excellence in all tasks. The Prophet ﷺ said:

عن عائشة رضي الله تعالى عنها قالت : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " إن الله يحب إذا عمل أحدكم عملاً أن يتقنه. (أخرجه أبو يعلى والطبراني)

“Allah loves that when any of you does a task, he perfects it.”

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم "إنَّ الله تعالى يُحِبُّ مَعَالِيَ الْأُمُورِ ، وَأَشْرَافَهَا ، وَيَكْرَهُ سَفْسَافَهُ " (أخرجه الطبراني عن الحسين بن علي أمير المؤمنين)

“Allah loves serious efforts and dislikes trivial pursuits.”

Note on Perceived Imperfections

One might ask: *How can everything Allah created be perfect if we observe defects in some creations?* This question reflects a limited understanding. Allah says:

((لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ)) الأنبياء: 23

“He is not questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned.” (Al-Anbiyā’ 21:23)

What appears as imperfection may carry hidden wisdom. For instance, a person born blind may, through patience, be guaranteed Paradise. The Prophet ﷺ said:

قال النبي ﷺ: “من فقد حبيبتيه فصبر عوّضه الله منهما الجنة
“(مسند أحمد بن حنبل)“

**“If someone loses their sight and remains patient,
Allah will grant them Paradise.”**

Al-Hakeem (الْحَكِيم) - The All-Wise

Allah's name *Al-Hakeem* appears 38 times in the Qur'an with the definite article *Al-* and 53 times without it *Hakeem* (حكيم). It is frequently paired with names such as:

- *Al-Aziz* (The Mighty)
- *Al-Aleem* (The All-Knowing)
- *Al-Khabir* (The All-Aware)

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)) الحشر: 24

“He is Allah—the Creator, the Producer, the Fashioner. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.” (Al-Hashr 59:24)

The repeated pairing of *Al-Hakeem* with *Al-Aziz*, *Al-Aleem*, and *Al-Khabir* emphasizes that Allah's wisdom stems from His complete power, knowledge, and awareness. Every action He takes is based on absolute knowledge and flawless judgment.

Al-Hakeem comes from the Arabic root ḥ-k-m (ح-ك-م), which conveys meanings such as:

- To restrain or control
- To possess deep knowledge of the reality of things
- To pass judgment and enforce justice

Wisdom (ḥikmah) is the ability to place things in their proper place, time, manner, and measure, based on knowledge, experience, and sound judgment.

Allah's name **Al-Hakeem** reflects His perfect wisdom across all domains, including:

- Creation of the heavens and the earth
- Design of mankind and all living beings
- Control and governance over the universe
- Distribution of provisions
- Sending prophets and revelations
- Delivering justice and assigning reward or punishment

Key Expressions of Divine Wisdom:

1. Absolute Legislative Authority: Allah alone has the right to legislate and judge:
- 2.

((أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ)) المائدة: 50

“Is it the judgment of ignorance they seek? Who is better than Allah in judgment for a people who have certainty?” (Al-Mā'idah 5:50)

3. Wise Distribution of Provisions
- 4.

((وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ يُنزِلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ)) الشورى: 27

“If Allah were to expand provision for His servants, they would transgress, but He sends it in due measure as He wills. He is All-Aware, Ever-Watchful.” (Al-Shura 42:27)

5. Use of History as a Warning

((وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِّنَ الْأَنْبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُرْدَجَةٌ (4) حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ
الَّذُرِّ)) القمر: 4-5

“And there came to them news (of previous nations) that should be enough to deter. (4) Containing wisdom, but warnings did not benefit them.” (Al-Qamar 54:4–5)

6. Control Over Human Affairs

((وَإِن يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلاَّ هُوَ وَإِن يَمَسُّكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (17) وَهُوَ الْغَايُّ فَوقَ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ
الْخَبِيرُ)) الأنعام: 17-18

“If Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it but Him and if He causes you good, He has power over all things. (17) He is the dominant over all His servants; and He is the All-Wise, the All-Aware.” (Al-Anaam 6:17–18)

7. Complete Knowledge and Oversight

((وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يُعَلِّمُهَا إِلاَّ هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۗ
وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِن رَّوْقَةٍ إِلاَّ يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظُلْمَتٍ الْاَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ
وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلاَّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ)) الأنعام: 59

“With Him are the keys of the Unseen. No one knows them but He. He knows whatever is there in the earth, and in the sea. No leaf falls but He knows it and there is no grain in the dark layers of the earth nor anything fresh or dry but is recorded in a clear book ... all is recorded in a clear Book.” (Al-Anaam 6:59)

8. Support of the Righteous, Power Against the Wrongdoers

((وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)) الأنفال:10
“Victory is only from Allah. Indeed, Allah is the All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (Al-Anfal 8:10)

9. Perfection in Creation

((وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ۚ قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ ۚ عَنَلِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ)) الأنعام: 73
“He is the One who created the heavens and the earth in truth. On the day He says "Be" Behold! it is. His Word is the truth. And His is the kingdom on the day the trumpet will be blown. He is the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen. For He is the All-Wise, the All-Aware”. (Al-Anaam 6:73)

((لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ)) التين:4
“Indeed, We created man in the best form...” (At-Tin 95:4)

10. Creation Has Purpose and Meaning

((أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ)) المؤمنون:
115

“Did you think We created you without purpose and that you would not be returned to Us?” (Al-Mu’minūn 23:115)

11. The Qur'an as a Source of Wisdom

((كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ)) هود: 1
“(This is) a book whose verses are perfected and then explained — from One who is All-Wise, All-Aware.” Hud 11:1)

((وَأَنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ (٤١) لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ))
فصلت: 42

“No falsehood can approach it , neither from its front nor from its behind: it is a revelation from the All-Wise, the Praiseworthy.” (Fussilat 41:42)

12. The Prophet's Role in Teaching Wisdom

((هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ))
الجمعة: 2

“He sent among the unlettered people a messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His signs, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom.” (Al-Jumu‘ah 62:2)

13. Wisdom as a Divine Gift

((يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ)) البقرة: 269

“He grants wisdom to whom He wills. Whoever is given wisdom has been given great good. Only those who are endowed with insight bears this in mind.” (Al-Baqarah 2:269)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Trust in Allah's Plan: Believing in *Al-Hakīm* brings peace and acceptance, even in hardship. Everything happens with divine purpose and wisdom.

((وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَسَبِّحْ...)) الطُّور: 48

“Be patient with the command of your Lord. You are under Our watch...” (Aṭ-Ṭur 52:48)

2. Pursue Wisdom as a Life Goal: Wisdom can be learned. Study the Qur'an and reflect on creation to see Allah's wisdom and deepen your understanding of Him. The more you know Allah, the wiser you become.

3. Apply and Share Wisdom

Without wisdom, actions lead to failure in this life and the next. Seek wisdom from Allah, use it, and teach it.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

قَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: “لَا حَسَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَتَيْنِ رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَسُلْطَ عَلَى هَلَكْتِهِ فِي الْحَقِّ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْحِكْمَةَ فَهُوَ يَقْضِي بِهَا وَيُعَلِّمُهَا” (البخاري ومسلم)

“Envy is not justified except in two cases: a man whom Allah gave wealth and he spends it rightly, and a man whom Allah gave wisdom and he judges by it and teaches it.” (Bukhārī & Muslim)

Al-Wadud (الودود) - “The Affectionate”, “The Most Loving”

Allah’s name Al-Wadud appears twice in the Qur’an:

((نَهْهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ (13) وَهُوَ الْعَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ)) البروج: 13-14
“Indeed, He alone originates and resurrects. (13) And He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Loving.”
(Al-Burooj 85:13-14)

((وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ)) هود: 90
“But ask forgiveness of your Lord and turn unto Him (in repentance): for my Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving.” (Hud 11:90)

A core Islamic truth is that our relationship with Allah should be driven more by love than by fear. This is beautifully emphasized in:

((يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ)) المائدة
“O’ you who believe, if any of you turn back from his religion, Allah will bring forth people whom He loves, and they love Him.” (Al-Maeda 5:54)

Notice that Allah’s love comes first “He loves them”—before their love for Him.

Although none of Allah’s names is “Al-Habīb” (الحبيب) (The Loving One in emotional terms). Allah’s name Al-Wadud conveys something deeper: love expressed through action.

Wud (وُدّ) vs. Ḥubb (حُبّ):

- Ḥubb is emotional love.
- Wud is love expressed through action, generosity, and care.

You may feel love for someone but do nothing to show it. Wud means you act to bring joy and comfort to the one you love. That is Allah, Al-Wadud—He loves you and constantly shows it.

Imam Hammad ibn Salamah ibn Dinar (91-167 H) said:

قال الإمام حماد بن سلمة رحمه الله: لو خُيِّرْت بين أن يُحاسبني الله أو يُحاسبني أبوي، لاخترت محاسبة الله، لأن الله أرحم بي من أبوي.

“If I had to choose who would judge me—Allah or my parents—I would choose Allah, for He is more merciful to me than they are.”

Consider the many ways Allah demonstrates His love:

- He created the sun for warmth and light, and darkness for rest.
- He didn't just provide sustenance, but diverse foods, beautiful flowers, fragrant scents, colorful birds, and stunning sunsets—many of which serve no survival purpose, only to please us.
- All of this is given equally to believers and disbelievers.

But for believers, Allah reserves a special love:

((إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ وُدًّا))

مریم: 96

“Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds— Al-Rahman will bestow on them (Wud) [special love].” (Maryam 19:96)

How would you feel if any dignitary/celebrity mentioned you by name? Surely, you would be so excited and very proud. Why don't you feel the same excitement when Allah, the Lord of the universe and the King of all kings mentions your name and tells everyone that He loves you? The Prophet (PBUH) said:

Imagine being publicly loved by a king—how honored would you feel? Now imagine being loved by Allah, and having your name announced in the heavens. The Prophet ﷺ said:

قال رسول الله ﷺ: " إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ عَبْدًا دَعَا جَبْرِيْلَ ، فَقَالَ : إِنِّي أَحَبُّ فَلَانًا فَأَجَبَّهُ ، قَالَ : فَيُحِبُّهُ جَبْرِيْلُ ، ثُمَّ يَنَادِي فِي السَّمَاءِ ، فَيَقُولُ : إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحِبُّ فَلَانًا فَأَجِبُّوهُ ، فَيَحِبُّهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ ، ثُمَّ يَوْضَعُ لَهُ الْقَبُولُ فِي الْأَرْضِ " . [البخاري عن أبي هريرة]

“When Allah loves someone, He calls Jibril and says: ‘I love so-and-so, so love him.’ Then Jibril announces in the heavens: ‘Allah loves so-and-so, so love him.’ Then the inhabitants of the heavens love him, and he is granted acceptance on earth.”
(Bukhari)

Allah doesn't need our love—it adds nothing to Him. Yet, He invites us to love Him so He can fill the heavens and the earth with love for us.

It is natural that you may not want to expose your weaknesses to anyone and shed your tears in front of anyone. But, when you are with Al-Wadud (الودود), you can because He loves you and wants to help you.

Al-Wadūd wants us to come to Him, especially in weakness and pain. He wants us to share our fears,

anxieties, and needs. He is always available to comfort and console us.

When the Prophet ﷺ was rejected in Tā'if, wounded and exhausted, he cried out—not with complaint, but with loving vulnerability:

"اللهم إليك أشكو ضعف قوتي، وقلة حيلتي، وهواني على الناس..."

“O Allah, to You alone I complain of my weakness, lack of resources, and humiliation before men.”

When the wife of Imran gave birth to a girl, concerned she could not fulfill her vow to dedicate a male child to Allah’s service, she called upon Al-Wadud saying: (O my Lord, I have delivered of a female!). But Allah, Al-Wadud, reassured her, not only did He accept her daughter Maryam, but honored her beyond measure:

((فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ)) آل عمران: 37

And so it was that her Lord graciously accepted her and made her grow in purity and beauty, and He entrusted her to the foster care of Zakariya. Whenever he entered (her) sanctuary to see her, he found her with provisions. He said: "O Maryam! From where this comes to you." She said: "It is from Allah: for Allah provides for whoever He wills without measure." (Al-Imran 3:37)

Who else, other than Al-Wadud, invites you to confide in Him—without judgment, without expectations, simply out of pure love

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Love Allah Sincerely: Reciprocate Allah’s love through obedience and devotion.
2. Live by the Qualities Allah Loves: Allah loves those who are:
 - Righteous (المُحْسِنِينَ)
 - God-conscious (الْمُتَّقِينَ)
 - Just (الْمُقْسِطِينَ)
 - Pure (الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ)
 - Repentant (التَّوَّابِينَ)
 - Trustful of Him (الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ)
 - Patient (الصَّابِرِينَ)
3. Love and Serve Creation: Show mercy and kindness to others, just as Allah shows it to you.

4. Love for the Sake of Allah: Love others not for gain, but purely for Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: “سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمْ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ..... وَرَجُلَانِ تَحَابَبَا فِي اللَّهِ اجْتَمَعَا عَلَيْهِ وَتَفَرَّقَا عَلَيْهِ...“ (البخاري و صحيح مسلم)

“Seven are shaded by Allah on the Day of Judgment... two people who loved each other for the sake of Allah, meeting and parting on that basis...” (Bukhārī & Muslim)

“من أحب لله وأبغض لله وأعطى لله ومنع لله فقد استكمل الإيمان “ (رواه أبو داود)

“Whoever loves, hates, gives, and withholds for the sake of Allah has perfected faith.”

Al-Waliyy (الْوَلِيُّ) – The Guardian - Al-Mawlā (المَوْلَى) – The Master

Both Al-Waliyy and Al-Mawlā are beautiful names of Allah that emphasize His nearness, protection, and authority. While Al-Waliyy is included in the 99 Names of Allah, Al-Mawlā is also mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah with a closely related meaning.

Al-Waliyy (The Guardian) is mentioned in the following verses:

((أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ فَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْوَلِيُّ وَهُوَ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)) الشورى: 9

**“Have they taken others as guardians besides Him? But Allah is the Guardian. He gives life and causes death, and He is capable of all things.”
(Ash-Shura 42:9)**

((وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ)) الشورى: 28

“And He is the One who sends down rain after they lose hope and spreads His mercy. He is the Guardian, the Praiseworthy.” (Al-Shura 42:28)

((إِنَّ وَلِيِّ اللَّهِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ)) الأعراف: 196

“Surely, my Guardian is Allah Who reveals the book and He befriends the righteous.” (Al-A'araf 7:196)

Al-Mawla (The Master) is mentioned in the following verses:

((فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۗ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ))
الأنفال: 40

“If they turn away, then know that Allah is your Master. How excellent is the Master and how excellent the Helper!” (Al-Anfal 8:40)

((وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ)) الحج:
78

“And hold fast to Allah. He is your Master. How excellent He is as the Master and the Helper.” (Al-Hajj 22:78)

((قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا ۗ هُوَ مَوْلَانَا ۗ وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ)) التوبة: 51

“Say: Nothing will happen to us except what Allah has written for us. He is our Master. And in Allah let the believers put their trust.” (Al-Tawba 9:51)

The Prophet ﷺ also combined both names in his supplication:

عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَرْقَمٍ ، قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: “اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، وَزَكَّاهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا.” (رواه مسلم)

“O Allah, grant my soul its Taqwa and purify it. You are the best to purify it. You are its Guardian and its Master.” (Muslim)

Both Al-Waliyy and Al-Mawlā come from a root meaning nearness, suggesting closeness, support, and authority. That’s why Allah says:

((وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ ۗ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ)) ق: 16

“Indeed, We created man, and We know what his soul whispers. We are closer to him than his jugular vein.” (Qaf 50:16)

This nearness means Allah is the true Guardian and Master over everything—offering protection, guidance, and care to those who choose Him as their Waliyy.

((ذَلِكِ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ))

محمد: 11

“That is because Allah is guardian of those who believe, and the disbelievers have no guardian.” (Muhammad 47:11)

((هُنَالِكَ الْوَلَايَةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ ۖ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا)) الكهف: 44
“There, the (only) guardianship (protection) comes from Allah, the True. He is the best in reward and the best in outcome.” (Al-Kahf 18:44)

So, if you seek to be near to Allah, He becomes your Waliyy. He will protect and guide you and thus you should never have any fear. Allah says:

When Allah is your Waliyy, you never need to fear anything—not enemies, hardship, or conspiracies—because Allah is fully aware and in control.:

((وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ ۗ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا)) النساء:

45

“Indeed, Allah knows your enemies well. Allah is sufficient as a Guardian and sufficient as a Helper.” (Al-Nisaa 4:45)

Even in the face of hardship, believers trust that Allah’s plan is wise and beneficial:

((قل: لن يصيبنا إلا ما كتب الله لنا، هو مولانا، وعلى الله فليتوكل المؤمنون)) التوبة: 51

“Say: Nothing will happen to us except what Allah has decreed. He is our Guardian. And in Him let the believers put their trust.” (Al-Tawbah 9:51)

If Allah is your Waliyy, you will feel secure in this life and in the Hereafter as He said:

((إن الذين قالوا ربنا الله ثم استقاموا تتنزل عليهم الملائكة: ألا تخافوا ولا تحزنوا وأبشروا بالجنة التي كنتم توعدون (30) نحن أولياؤكم في الحياة الدنيا وفي الآخرة)) فصلت: 30-31

“Indeed, those who say: “Our Lord is Allah”, then remain steadfast, on them the angels descend, saying: Do not fear or grieve. Rejoice in the Paradise you were promised. (30) We are your guardians in this life and in the Hereafter.” (Fussilat 41:30-31)

To deserve Allah’s guardianship, a person must embody Taqwa and Eman that are demonstrated by righteousness:

((ألا إن أولياء الله لا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون (62) الذين آمنوا وكانوا يتقون)) يونس: 62-63

“Behold, verily on those whom Allah is their guardian, there will be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (62) Those who believe and have Taqwa.” (Yunus 10:62-63)

((والله ولي المتقين)) الجاثية: 19

“And Allah is the guardian of those who have Taqwa”. (Al-Jathiya 45:19)

((إن ولي الله الذي نزل الكتاب، وهو يتولى الصالحين)) الأعراف:

196

“Surely, my Guardian is Allah Who reveals the book. He befriends the righteous.” (Al-A’araf 7:196)

The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah declares:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: (إن الله تعالى قال: من عادى لي ولياً فقد آذنته بالحرب، وما تقرب إلي عبدي بشيء أحب إلي مما افترضته عليه، ولا يزال عبدي يتقرب إلي بالنوافل حتى أحبه، فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به، وبصره الذي يبصر به، ويده التي يبطش بها، ورجله التي يمشي بها، ولئن سألني لأعطينه ولئن استعاذني لأعيذنه. (البخاري)

“Whoever shows enmity My “walia” (My ward; the one I mam His Guardian), I declare war against him. My servant draws near to Me through what I have made obligatory. Then, he continues to draw nearer through voluntary acts until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing that he hears with; his sight that he sees with, his hand that he grips with, his foot that he walks with. If he asks Me, I will give him. If he seeks My protection, I will protect him...” (Bukhari)

Note that the word "Wali" is used for both Allah and the person. When Allah is the Wali of a person, it means that Allah is the Guardian and Protector of that individual. However, when a person is described as a Wali of Allah, it means that the person is under Allah's guardianship and care—in other words, he is “a ward of Allah”.

We must be mindful that Satan is also near. The Prophet ﷺ said:

عن صفية رضي الله عنها، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "إن الشيطان يجري من ابن آدم مجرى الدم". (البخاري ومسلم)
"The devil flows through the son of Adam like blood." (Bukhari and Muslim).

This means we must decide: Who will have nearness and influence over us — Allah or Satan?

If we choose Allah as our Waliyy (Guardian), He will guide us and protect us from going astray. But if we allow Satan to take that role, he will surely mislead us. Allah says:

((الله ولي الذين آمنوا يخرجهم من الظلمات إلى النور، والذين كفروا أولياؤهم الطاغوت يخرجونهم من النور إلى الظلمات، أولئك أصحاب النار هم فيها خالدون)) البقرة: 257

"Allah is the Guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their guardians are false gods. They bring them out of light into darkness. They are the people of the Fire where they will remain for forever. (Al-Baqarah 2:257)

((وإن الشياطين ليوحون إلى أوليائهم ليجادلوكم، وإن أطعتموهم إنكم لمشركون)) الأنعام: 121

"The devils inspire their wards (Awliyaa) to argue with you. But if you obey them, you would be idolaters." (Al-Anaam 6:121)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Earn Allah's Guardianship through Taqwa and Righteousness

To have Allah as your Waliyy—your guardian, supporter, and protector—you must:

- Develop deep **Taqwa** (God-consciousness)
- Be righteous in all your actions
- Obey His commands
- Perform voluntary deeds beyond obligations

This is how you become among Allah’s Awliyā’ (one of Allah’s wards):

((وهذا صراط ربك مستقيماً، قد فصلنا الآيات لقوم يذكرون
(126) لهم دار السلام عند ربهم، وهو وليهم بما كانوا يعملون))
الأنعام: 127-126

“This is the path of your Lord—a straight path. We have detailed the signs for those who take heed. (126) For them is the home of peace with their Lord, and He is their Guardian because of what they used to do.” (Al-Anaam 6:126-127)

2. Choose Your Companions Wisely

People are either **Awliyā’ of Allah** or **Awliyā’ of Satan**. Choose to befriend those who are close to Allah, as they will help you stay firm on the righteous path.

((إنما وليكم الله ورسوله والذين آمنوا الذين يقيمون الصلاة
ويؤتون الزكاة وهم راكعون)) المائدة: 55

“Your only allies (guardians) are Allah, His Messenger, and the believers—those who establish prayer, pay zakat, and bow in submission.” (Al-Mā’idah 5:55)

((والمؤمنون والمؤمنات بعضهم أولياء بعض، يأمرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر، ويقيمون الصلاة ويؤتون الزكاة ويطيعون الله ورسوله، أولئك سيرحمهم الله، إن الله عزيز حكيم)) التوبة: 71

“The believing men and women are allies (guardians) to one another. They enjoin good, forbid evil, establish prayer, give zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will show mercy to them. Indeed, Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.” (At-Tawbah 9:71)

3. Call Upon Allah by His Name Al-Waliyy in Your Du‘ā’

- Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) said:

((ربي قد آتيتني من الملك وعلمتني من تأويل الأحاديث فاطر السماوات والأرض أنت وليي في الدنيا والآخرة توفني مسلماً وألحقني بالصالحين)) يوسف: 101

“My Lord, You have given me authority and taught me the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and the earth, You are my Guardian in this world and the Hereafter. Let me die as a Muslim and join me with the righteous.” (Yusuf 12:101)

- Prophet Musa (Moses) prayed:

((أنت ولينا فاغفر لنا وارحمنا، وأنت خير الغافرين)) الأعراف:

155

“You are our Guardian, so forgive us and have mercy upon us. You are the Best of Forgivers.” (Al-A‘rāf 7:155)

- Allah instructed believers to say:

((ربنا لا تؤاخذنا إن نسينا أو أخطأنا، ربنا ولا تحمل علينا إصراً كما حملته على الذين من قبلنا، ربنا ولا تحمّلنا ما لا طاقة لنا به، واعفُ عَنَّا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا، أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصِرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ)) البقرة: 286

“Our Lord, do not hold us accountable if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord, do not place on us a burden like that which You placed on those before us. Our Lord, do not burden us with more than we can bear. Pardon us, forgive us, and have mercy upon us. You are our Guardian, so grant us victory over the disbelieving people.” (Al-Baqarah 2:286)

Al-Wahid (الْوَاحِدُ) “The One” and Al-Ahad (الْأَحَدُ) “The Only One, The Unique”

The names *Al-Wahid* and *Al-Ahad* are cornerstones of Islamic monotheism. Together, they affirm that Allah has no partner, rival, equal or comparison — not in His essence, His names, nor His attributes. Their combined meanings emphasize that:

1. He is singular, with no second beside Him.
2. He cannot be divided, duplicated, or replicated.
3. He is utterly unique — beyond all comparison.
4. His reality surpasses human comprehension.

Allah’s name *Al-Ahad* appears once in the Quran, in Surah Al-Ikhlāṣ (the Sincerity) — a chapter that encapsulates the very heart of Tawḥīd:

((قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿1﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿2﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿3﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ)) سورة الإخلاص: 1-4

“Say: He is Allah the Only One; (1) Allah, the Self-Sufficient; (2) He neither begets nor begotten; (3) And there is none like Him.” (Al-Ikhlās 112:1-4)

Al-Aḥad expresses Allah’s absolute uniqueness. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“ قَالَ أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ , أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ , قَالَ: " أسست السماوات السبع والأرضون السبع على قل هو الله أحد (رواه أحمد وغيره)"

“The seven heavens and the seven earths are established upon: ‘Say: He is Allah, the One.’”

As long as people continue declaring Allah’s Oneness, the world remains. Once this stops, it loses its purpose:

((وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ)) الذاريات: 56

“I did not create the jinn and humans except that they worship Me.” (Adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56)

Allah’s name Al-Wahid (The One) appears six times in the Qur’an, always paired with Al-Qahhar (The All-Dominant), underscoring that Allah’s Oneness is linked to His supreme power and absolute authority:

((قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ)) الرعد: 16

“Say: Allah is the Creator of all things. He is the One, the All-Dominant.”. (Al-Ra’d 13;16)

((قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنذِرٌ وَمَا مِن إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ)) ص: 65

“Say: I am only a warner. There is no god except Allah—the One, the All-Dominant.” (Sad 38:65)

These verses serve as clear warnings against associating partners with Allah and emphasize His exclusive right to be worshipped. Allah strongly refutes

all forms of association (shirk), especially the idea of divine plurality:

((يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ
إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ
وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ أَنْتَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ
إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهُهُ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ وَمَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا)) النساء: 171

“O People of the Book do not exaggerate in your religion and do not say anything about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allah, and His word that He delivered to Mary, and a spirit from Him. So, believe in Allah and His messengers, and do not say "Three" – stop it, that is better for you! - Allah is only One God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs all that in the heavens and in the earth. And Allah is sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.” (Al-Nisa 4:171)

((لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهُ
وَاحِدٌ)) المائدة: 73

“Surely, the disbelievers are those who say: "Allah is one of three." But there is no god but One God...” (Al-Maeda 5:73)

Rejecting Allah’s Oneness is the gravest sin in Islam — one that is unforgivable if not repented before death:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ
يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا)) النساء: 48

“Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating partners with Him, but He forgives anything less

than that for whomever He wills. Whoever associates partners with Allah has committed a tremendous sin.” (Al-Nisa 4:48)

((مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ)) المائدة: 72

“Whoever associates a partner with Allah, Allah has forbidden Paradise for him. His abode is the Fire, and the wrongdoers will have no helpers.” (Al-Maeda 5:72)

Belief in Allah’s Oneness is liberating. It frees the heart from fear of others and removes dependence on anything besides Allah. It brings peace and certainty, knowing that everything rests in His hands:

((وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ)) هود: 123

“To Allah belongs the unseen of the heavens and the earth. All matters return to Him. So, worship Him and rely on Him. Your Lord is never unaware of what you do.” (Hud 11:123)

Rejecting this belief leads to confusion, fear, and loss in both this world and the Hereafter:

((فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُعَذَّبِينَ)) الشعراء: 213
“So do not invoke with Allah another god, or you will be among the doomed.” (Ash-Shuara 26:213)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Embrace Your Uniqueness

Allah created you with unique talents for a purpose. Develop them and leave a legacy of knowledge, virtue, kindness, and sincerity.

2. Purify Your Belief from Hidden Shirk (Association)

Regularly examine your heart to ensure you rely on no one besides Allah. The Prophet ﷺ warned:

عن محمود بن لبيد أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "إن أخوف ما أخاف عليكم الشرك الأصغر. قالوا: وما الشرك الأصغر يا رسول الله؟ قال: الرياء". (رواه أحمد)

"What I fear most for you is minor shirk: showing off." (Ahmad)

3. Reflect on Allah's Power Through Knowledge

Ponder the Qur'an and creation deeply. Allah says:

((فَأِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ))
الحج: 46

"It is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts in the chests." (Al-Hajj 22:46)

4. Be Honest and Clear About Your Faith

If asked, declare your belief in Allah's Oneness with clarity and conviction.

5. Seek Evidence, Not Blind Following

True faith rests on understanding, not imitation. Allah commands:

((فَاعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ)) محمد: 19

"So know that there is no god but Allah."

(Muḥammad 47:19)

The Prophet ﷺ warned about the danger of shirk committed by those who blindly follow scholars and monks without knowledge or evidence, saying:

“إِنَّهُمْ حَرَّمُوا عَلَيْنِمْ الْحَلَالَ وَأَحَلُّوا لَهُمْ الْحَرَامَ فَاتَّبَعُوهُمْ فَذَلِكَ عِبَادَتُهُمْ إِيَّاهُمْ” (رواه الترمذي)

"They permitted what Allah forbade and forbade what Allah permitted, and the people followed them. That was their worship of them." (Tirmidhi)

6. Read and Reflect on Surah Al-Ikhlāṣ Regularly

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“قل هو الله أحد، تعدل ثلث القرآن.” (البخاري، مسلم)

“Say: He is Allah, the One’ is equal to one-third of the Qur’an.” (Bukhārī, Muslim)

This chapter summarizes the essence of Tawḥīd.

7. Pair Tawḥīd with Righteous Deeds

Monotheism is the foundation, but action completes faith:

((فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا)) (الكهف: 110)

"Whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord." (Al-Kahf 18:110)

Al-Aleem (العليم) – “The All-Knowing”

Allah’s name Al-Aleem appears in the Quran more than 150 times, often paired with other divine names that highlight different dimensions of His infinite knowledge, such as:

Al-Hakeem (The All-wise) (الحكيم)

((قَالَوَا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ))
البقرة: 32

“They (angels) said: "Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Surely, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” (Al-Baqarah 2:32)

Al-Aziz (The All-Mighty) (العزیز)

((فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ)) الأنعام: 96

“He is the Cleaver of the daybreak. He made the night for rest, and the sun and the moon for reckoning. This is a measure set by the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing” (Al-Anam 6:96)

Al-Qadeer (The All-Powerful) (القدير)

((وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ ۚ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ)) النحل: 70

“Allah created you and will take you back. Some will reach old age, so that they know nothing after having known (much). Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.” (Al-Nahl 16:70)

Al-Khabeer (The All-Aware) (الخبير)

((... إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ)) الحجرات: 13
“Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is the one with most Taqwa. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Al-Hujurat 49:13)

Al-Khallaq (The Creator) (الخالق)

((إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ)) الحجر: 86
“Indeed, Your Lord is the Creator of all, the All-knowing” (Al-Hijr 15:85-86)

Al-Samie (The All-Hearer) (السميع)

((وَأَمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ)) فصلت: 36
“If Satan tempts you, seek refuge in Allah. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.” (Fussilat 41:36)

The Prophet ﷺ taught his companions to seek refuge from Satan by saying:

“أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ السَّمِيعِ الْعَلِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ، مِنْ هَمِّهِ وَنَفْخِهِ وَنَفْسِهِ ” (أبو داود والترمذي والنسائي)
“I seek refuge in Allah the All-Hearing, All-Knowing, from the accursed Shaytan and his evil whisper, breath and impurity.” (Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Nasa’i)

The name Al-‘Aleem in Arabic is in the intensive form, indicating the highest degree of both depth and breadth of

knowledge. Allah’s knowledge encompasses everything—seen and unseen, past, present, and future, down to the smallest details and greatest outcomes.

Unlike human knowledge, which is acquired, Allah’s knowledge is intrinsic and eternal. All that exists is known because Allah knows it—not the other way around.

((وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)) الإسراء: 85

“You have been given of knowledge but a little” (Al-Isra 17:85)

Even though humans may be described as “Aleem” (knowledgeable)—as Prophet Yusuf described himself:

((قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ)) يوسف: 55

“He said: "Appoint me over the storehouses of the land. I am a trustworthy custodian and knowledgeable." (Yusuf 12:55)

Yet, our knowledge remains extremely limited in comparison to Allah’s infinite knowledge.

Only Allah has full knowledge of what was, what is, and what will be. He knows both the unseen (al-ghayb) (الْغَيْبِ) and the seen (ash-shahādah) (الشَّهَادَةِ):

((وَقُلِ اْعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَىٰ اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ))

إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ)) التوبة: 105

“Say: Do [good deeds]! Allah will see your deeds, and so will His Messenger and the believers. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will inform you of what you used to do.” (Al-Tawbah 9:105)

((هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ)) الحشر: 22

“He is Allah, there is no god but He— Knower of the unseen and the seen.” (Al-Hashr 59:22)

Note: In several verses, Allah mentions the unseen (al-ghayb) before the seen/present (ash-shahādah)—which may suggest that knowing the present is even more remarkable from a divine perspective. This point is further discussed in the appendix.

Nothing in the universe escapes Allah’s knowledge—not even the smallest atom and what is in it:

((لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَصْغَرُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرُ)) سبأ: 3

“Not an atom or less or greater than that whether in the heavens or in the earth escapes Him.” (Saba 34:3)

Allah He knows when every leaf falls, every grain in the depths of the earth:

((وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ)) الأنعام: 59

“And with Him are the keys of the Unseen. No One knows them but He. He knows what is in the land and the sea. No leaf ever falls but that He knows about it, and there is no grain in the darkness of the earth, or anything fresh or dry that is not in a clear record.” (Al-Anaam 6:59)

He knows what enters and emerges from the earth, what descends from the sky and what ascends to it:

((يَعْزُجُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ))
الحديد: 4

“He knows all that enters the earth and all that emerges from it, and all that comes down from the sky and all that ascends from it; and He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah is Seer of what you do.” (Al-Hadeed 57:4)

Allah even knows what the soul whispers and He is closer to each person than their jugular vein:
((وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ)) ق: 16

“We verily created man, and We know what his soul whispers to him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein” (Qaf 50:16)

His knowledge extends to every womb and its mysteries:

((اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنْثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ سَوَكُلٌ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ (8) عَلِيمٌ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالِ))
الرعد: 8-9

“Allah knows what every female bears, and by how much the wombs fall short (of their time or number) or exceed. Everything with Him is in (due) proportion. (8) He is the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Great, the Most- High.” (Ar Ra’d 13:8-9)

Such verses invite us to reflect deeply on the magnitude of Allah’s knowledge, encouraging us to value knowledge, pursue science, and recognize the patterns embedded in creation. These patterns, visible

to those who reflect, reveal the beauty of Allah's wisdom and design.

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Pursue deep and broad knowledge: Strive to excel in your field with diligence and sincerity.
2. Appreciate the value of small details: Nothing is insignificant. Every action, every moment matters.
3. Develop awe of Allah through understanding His knowledge: Reflect on His mastery to strengthen your faith and obedience.

4. Seek knowledge through Taqwa

((واتقوا الله ويعلمكم الله والله بكل شيء عليم)) البقرة: 282

“Have Taqwa of Allah, and Allah will teach you. Allah knows all things.” (Al-Baqarah 2:282)

5. Commit to studying natural sciences and the universe: The Qur'an encourages reflection on the universe as a sign for people of understanding.

((إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَآخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ))

البقرة: 164

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day, and the ships which sail through the sea with that which is of use to mankind, and the water (rain) which Allah sends down from the sky and makes the earth alive therewith after its death, and the moving (living) creatures of all kinds that He has scattered therein, and in the veering of winds and clouds which are held between the sky and the earth, are indeed sign for people of understanding.” (Al-Baqarah 2:164)

((إن في خلق السماوات والأرض واختلاف الليل والنهار لآيات لأولي الألباب)) آل عمران: 190

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for those who endowed with understanding.” (Al-Imran 3:190)

6. Embrace scientific advancement as part of Islamic purpose

Imam Badi al-Zaman Sa'id Nursi (الإمام بديع الزمان (سعيد النورسي), the great Turkish scholar who was born in 1873 said:

“المعجزات في كتاب الله هي وعد للبشر سيبلغون مثلها بالاسباب والعلم” .

“The miracles mentioned in the Qur'an are a divine promise that humans will one day reach them through knowledge and effort.”

This includes innovations like teleportation, advanced communication with other life forms, and cures for all diseases. Muslims should be at the forefront, guided by their certainty in Allah's promises.

The more you reflect on the expanse of His knowledge, the more your heart fills with awe, gratitude, and motivation to live a life of purpose and awareness.

Discussion on The Seen vs. the Unseen

In several verses, Allah mentions the unseen (al-ghayb) before the seen/the present (ash-shahādah)—suggesting the latter (the seen) is even more extraordinary for Allah to know.

One may wonder: Isn't it easier for Allah, who is unseen, to know the seen? But even we humans primarily perceive the past (unseen) rather than the seen/the present.

Why We Don't Actually See the Present

Vision works in stages:

1. Light reflects off objects and enters the eye.
2. The retina converts light into electrical signals.
3. The brain interprets the signals into images.

These steps take time. Even at the speed of light (670 million mph), a person standing 10 feet away is seen 10 million femtoseconds later. By then, the present has already passed.

Dr. Ahmed Zewail, who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, demonstrated that chemical reactions occur in femtoseconds (10^{-15} seconds)—yet even that is 28 orders of magnitude slower than the Planck time (10^{-43} seconds), the theoretical smallest unit of time.

Allah sees and knows the present without any delay, while we perceive only what has already happened.

The Vastness of Allah's Knowledge

The James Webb Space Telescope has identified a star whose light took 13.6 billion years to reach us. It may now be over 30 billion light-years away. That's 80 sextillion miles—and yet, Allah knows its exact location and every detail about it.

Allah's knowledge encompasses both the vast and the minuscule. The Planck length, the smallest measurable distance, is around 1.6×10^{-32} mm—trillions of times smaller than a proton. Even there, Allah knows what exists and what changes moment by moment.

The Significance of Knowledge of Minor Even such as a Leaf falling from a Tree

The Butterfly Effect, introduced by Edward Lorenz in 1963, highlights how tiny events can cause massive changes over time. Allah alone knows all these causes and effects—He governs the seen and the unseen, the smallest particles and the farthest galaxies.

Al-Haleem (الحليم) (The Forbearing)

The name Al-Haleem comes from the root ḥ-l-m (حلم), which conveys forbearance, patience, gentleness, clemency, and self-restraint. In Arabic, this quality is so noble that it is said:

- “Ḥilm is the master of all virtues.” (الحلم سيد الأخلاق)
- “A person with ḥilm is nearly a prophet.” (كاد الحليم أن يكون نبياً)

Al-Haleem is commonly translated as “The Forbearing”—the One who delays punishment despite having full power to act, allowing the wrongdoer time to reflect, repent, and return. Importantly, this is neither a delay meant to trap the wrongdoer for harsher punishment, nor a result of weakness or inability to act.

Allah’s name Haleem (Forbearing) came in the Quran 11. In all cases it is paired with other names to provide better understanding of the name. It is mentioned 6 times with the Forgiver (غفور), 3 times with the All-Knowing (عليم), one time with the Self-Sufficient (غني) and one time with the Appreciative (شكور). Examples of the Ayat that includes Allah’s attribute of Ḥilm (forbearance) include:

The name Al-Haleem appears 11 times in the Qur’an, always paired with another name to clarify its depth:

- 6 times with Al-Ghafour (The Forgiving)
- 3 times with Al-‘Aeem (The All-Knowing)
- Once each with Al-Ghani (The Rich, The Self-Sufficient) and Ash-Shakour (The Appreciative)

Examples:

((لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبْتُمْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)) البقرة: 225

“Allah does not hold you accountable for unintentional oaths, but He holds you accountable for what your hearts have earned. Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” (Al-Baqarah 2:225)

((وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ ۗ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)) البقرة: 235

“Know that Allah knows what is in your hearts, so beware of Him. And know that Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” (Al-Baqarah 2:235)

((تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ ۗ وَإِنْ مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا))
الإسراء: 44

“The seven heavens and the earth and all those who are in them declare His glory, and there is not a single thing but glorifies and praises Him, but you do not understand their glorifying; surely He is Forbearing, Forgiving” (Al-Isra 17:44)

((لَيُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ مُدْخَلًا يَرْضُونَهُ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ)) الحج: 59
“Verily He will admit them (the martyrs) to a place pleasing to them. Indeed Allah is All-Knowing, Forbearing. (Al-Hajj 22:59)

((وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَلِيمًا)) الأحزاب: 51
“And Allah knows (all) that is in your hearts: and Allah is All-Knowing Forbearing.” (Al-Ahzab 33:51)

((قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعَهَا أَدَىٰ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَنِّي
حَلِيمٌ)) البقرة: 263

“A kind word and forgiveness are better than charity followed by harm. Allah is Rich (Self Sufficient) and Forbearing.” [Al-Baqarah 2:263]

((إِن تَقْرُضُوا اللَّهَ فَرَضًا حَسَنًا يُضَاعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ)) التغابن: 17

“If you loan to Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you. And Allah is Appreciative, Forbearing” (Al-Taghabun 64:17)

Al-Haleem knows every transgression and has full power to punish instantly. Yet, He chooses to delay punishment, offering time for repentance. He continues to sustain even those who deny Him—out of mercy and wisdom.

((وَلَوْ يُوَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِم مَّا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَٰكِن
يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى)) النحل: 61

“If Allah were to punish people for their wrongdoing, He would not leave a single living creature on earth. But He gives them respite until an appointed time.” (Al-Nahl16:61)

((وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا
حِجَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ)) الأنفال: 32

“And they said: O Allah! If this is truly the truth from you, then rain down upon us stones from the sky, or bring upon us a painful punishment.” (Al-Anfal 8:32)

Despite such defiance, Allah responds not with instant wrath, but with ḥilm.

We all benefit daily from Allah’s forbearance. He gives us time and opportunities to correct our mistakes and return to Him. He even ignores the foolishness of those who ask for His punishment:

((وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى)) النحل: 61

“If Allah were to punish people for their wrongdoing, not a single creature would remain on earth. But He grants respite until an appointed time.” (An-Nahl 16:61)

However, forbearance does not apply indefinitely to all. Some people, if left unchecked, would harm others or themselves. In such cases, Allah may impose immediate justice, as part of His perfect wisdom.

Allah described both Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and his son Ismail (AS) with this quality of Hilim:

((إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيبٌ)) هود: 75

“Indeed, Ibrahim was forbearing, tender-hearted, and ever turning to Allah.” (Hud 11:75).

((فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ)) الصافات: 101

“So, We gave him (Ibrahim) glad tidings of a forbearing boy [Ismail].” (Al-Saffat 3:101)

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) used to invoke Allah with this name in times of distress:

عن ابن عباس: أَنَّ نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَدْعُو بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ الْحَلِيمِ فِي أَوْقَاتِ الْكُرْبِ:
 " لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ " (رواه البخاري)

“There is no god but Allah, the Majestic, the Forbearing. There is no god by Allah, the Lord of the grand throne. There is no god by Allah, the Lord of the Heavens, the Lord of the earth and the Lord of the honorable throne. (Bukhari)

He ﷺ also taught that forbearance can be cultivated:
 عن أبي الدرداء قال، قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ”إنما العلم بالتعلم وإنما الحلم بالتحلم.“ (رواه الطبراني وغيره)

“Knowledge comes through learning, and forbearance comes by practicing it.”

He (PBUH) used to praise this trait as he said to Al-Ashajj ‘Abdul-Qays:

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لأشجج عبد القيس: "إن فيك خصلتين يُحبُّهما الله: الحلم، والأناة" (رواه مسلم)

“You possess two qualities beloved to Allah: forbearance and thoughtful judgment.” (Muslim)

Forbearance in the Prophet’s Life: The Story of Tā’if:

When the Prophet ﷺ went to Tā’if seeking support after enduring persecution in Mecca, the leaders mocked him and incited a mob to drive him out. He was pelted with stones, wounded, and humiliated. As he left, heartbroken, Angel Jibril appeared with the Angel of

the Mountains, offering to crush the people between the surrounding peaks. Instead of revenge, the Prophet ﷺ replied:

"بل أرجو أن يُخرج الله من أصلابهم من يعبد الله وحده لا يشرك به شيئاً"

“No, I hope that Allah will bring from their descendants those who worship Him alone.”

His forbearance was rewarded: Ṭā'if later embraced Islam and its people played important roles in Islamic history, including battles and state administration.

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Don't act out of anger or rush to punish, especially with family.
2. Give people space to recognize and correct their mistakes.
3. Avoid being harsh and judgmental—people value patience and mercy.
4. Allow others the chance to change before holding them accountable.
5. Correct mistakes gently, without humiliation—your kindness will be remembered.
6. Reflect on the power of forbearance, its calming effect on you, and its impact on others.

Al-Ghahffar (الْغَفَّارُ) (The Most Forgiving), Al-Ghafour (الْغَفُورُ) (The Oft-Forgiving), and Al-Afuww (العفو) (The Pardoner, The Eraser of Sins)

Allah's names Al-Ghaffar, Al-Ghafour, and Al-Afuww all relate to forgiveness, but each reflects a unique aspect of divine mercy. However, they are often translated in English as the "Most Forgiving" ignoring the subtle difference.

Al-Ghaffar (الْغَفَّارُ), Al-Ghafour (الْغَفُورُ) both come from the root gh-f-r (غفر), meaning to forgive, cover, and conceal. They indicate Allah's mercy in forgiving sins and shielding the sinner from disgrace.

- Al-Ghaffar: Forgives regardless of the type of sin (quality).
- Al-Ghafour: Forgives regardless of the number of sins (quantity).

Al-Afuww comes from the root 'a-f-a (عفا), meaning to erase or remove. It refers to completely wiping away sins as if they never existed.

Allah's name Al-Ghaffar (الْغَفَّارُ):

Appears in the Quran 3 times, always paired with Al-Aziz (The Almighty).

((رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ)) ص: 66

“The Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything between them, the Almighty, the Most Forgiving.” (Sad 38:66)

((خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ
النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ أَلَا
هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَفُوفُ)) الزمر: 5

“He created the heavens and the earth in truth. He wraps the night over the day, and He wraps the day over the night: He subjected the sun and the moon (to His law), each one moving for an appointed term. Is He not the Almighty, the Most Forgiving?” (Al-Zumar 39:5)

((وَيَقُولُ مَا لِيَ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى النَّجْوَةِ وَتَدْعُونَنِي إِلَى النَّارِ (41)
تَدْعُونَنِي لِأَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَأُشْرِكَ بِهِ ۗ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَأَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ
إِلَى الْعَزِيزِ الْعَفُوفِ)) غافر: 41-42

“O my people! Why I call you to salvation while you are calling me to the Fire? (41) You call me to disbelieve in Allah and ascribe to Him partners about whom I have no knowledge, while I call you to the Almighty, the Most-Forgiving.” (Ghafir 40:41-42)

Allah’s name Al-Ghafour (الْغَفُورُ):

It is mentioned in the Quran 11 times

- 9 times with Al-Rahime (The Most Merciful)
- Once with Al-Aziz (The Almighty) and once with Al-Wadud (The Most Loving).

((نَبِّئْ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ)) الحجر: 49
“Tell My slaves that I am the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful” (Al-Hijr 15:49)

((قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ)) الزمر: 53

“Say: “O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins. He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Al-Zumr 39:53)

((تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمَلِكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (1) الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ))
الملك: 1-2

“Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Kingdom: and He is powerful over everything (1) He Who created death and life, that He may test you as of which is better in his deeds: and He is the All-Almighty, the Oft-Forgiving” (Al-Mulk 67:1-2)

((إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ (13) وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْودُودُ)) البروج: 13-14
“He begins (creation) and restores it (13) And He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Loving.” (Al-Burooj 85:13-14)

Allah’s name Al-Afuww (العفو):

It is mentioned in the Quran in 5 verses.

- 4 times with Al-Ghafour
- Once with Allah’s name Al-Qadeer (القدير) *The All-Powerful”.

((إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّيْنَاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضَ اللَّهِ وَأَسِعَتْ فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا (97) إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا

(98) فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُورًا عَفُورًا))

النساء: 97-99

“When angels take the souls of those who die while transgressing against themselves (i.e., committing injustice and sins), the angels say to them): "In what (predicament) were you under (that forced you to transgress against yourselves)?" They reply: " we were oppressed in the earth." They (the angels) say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate in it (away from the environment that made you commit sins)?" Those people will find their abode in Hell—what an evil refuge! (97) Except those who are (really) oppressed—men, women, and children who have no means (to emigrate), nor find a way. (98) These are they whom Allah is likely to forgive them, and Allah is Most-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.” (Al-Nisa 4:97-99)

((إِنَّ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا قَدِيرًا))

النساء: 149

“Whether you reveal a good deed or conceal it, or pardon an evil, verily, Allah is Most-forgiving, All-Powerful” (Al-Nisa 4:149)

The Prophet ﷺ taught ‘Ā’isha (RA) to say during Laylat al-Qadr:

“اللهم إنك عَفُورٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي” (الترمذي, أحمد,

والنسائي, وابن ماجه)

“O Allah, You are Most Pardoning, and You love to pardon—so pardon me.” (Tirmidhi)

In reading the Quran, one notes that the Al-Afwu (العفو) is associated with erasing major sins. Examples:

Banu Israel after worshiping the golden calf:

((وَادِّعْنَا مُوسَىٰ رَبَّعَيْنَ لِيَلَهُ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَنتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ (51) ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّن بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ))

البقرة: 51-52

“And remember when We appointed forty nights for Moses and (in his absence) you took the calf (for worship) and you were unjust. (51) Then We forgave you (afawnā ‘ankum) after that so you may be grateful.” (Al-Baqarah 2:51-52)

Muslims after fleeing at Uhud:

((إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)) آل

عمران: 155

“Those of you who turned back on the day the two armies met (i.e. the battle of Uhud), it was Satan who caused some of them to backslide (run away from the battlefield) because of some of what they had earned. But Allah has pardoned them. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” (Al-Imran 3:155)

Which is Greater: Al-Ghafūr or Al-‘Afūww? Scholars differ:

- Some say Al-‘Afūww is greater since it completely erases sins.
- Others say Al-Ghafūr is greater because, under certain conditions, it not only forgives but replaces sins with good deeds, as in:

((وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا (٦٨) يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا (٦٩) إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا)) الفرقان: 68-70

“(The faithful slaves of Allah) Those who do not invoke with Allah, any other god, and do not kill the life that Allah has made sacred, except for just cause, nor they commit fornication, and whoever does this shall face the punishment (68) (The punishment will be doubled for him on the Day of Judgment, and he will remain there humiliated forever. (69) Except those who repent, believe, and do righteous deeds—for such people, Allah will replace their sins with good deeds.” (Al-Fourqan 25:68-70)

The conditions for transforming sins to good deeds are:
 1) Sincere belief, 2) True repentance, 3) Avoiding willful disobedience, and 4) Performing righteous deeds.

To seek complete forgiveness—covering, erasure, and transformation—invoke all three names together: Al-Ghaffar, Al-Ghafour, Al-Afuww.

Exceptions to Forgiveness

1. Shirk (associating partners with Allah):

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا)) النساء: 48

“Allah does not forgive associating partners with Him, but He forgives anything else for whomsoever He wills; to set up a partner with Allah is to commit heinous sin.” (Al-Nisaa 4:48)

2. Persisting in sin knowingly without repentance:

((وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرَ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)) آل عمران: 135

“And those who commit shameful deeds or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins; and who is there to forgive sins except Allah? And They do not persist knowingly in what they’ve done.” (Al-Imran 3:135)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1/ Call upon Al-Ghaffar, Al-Ghafoor and Al-Afuww. No matter the nature or frequency of your sins, always seek Allah’s forgiveness sincerely, with repentance and righteous deeds.

2/ Never despair from Allah’s mercy. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

قال الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم: “والذي نفسي بيده لو لم تذنبا لذهب الله بكم ولجاء بقوم غيركم يذنبون فيستغفرون الله فيغفر لهم ” [الراوي : أبو هريرة ، المصدر : صحيح مسلم]

“By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if you did not sin, Allah would replace you with people who would sin and seek forgiveness, and He would forgive them.” (Muslim)

This Hadith is not a license to sin, but a reassurance that no sin is too great for Allah’s forgiveness—what matters is repentance.

3/ Forgive others as you hope for Allah’s forgiveness:

((وَليُغْفُوا وَلْيُصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)) النور: 22

“Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (Al-Nour 24:22)

While justice is allowed, forgiveness is praised:

((وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ (39) وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ)) الشورى: 39-40

“And those who, when an oppression inflicts them, they defend themselves. (39) The recompense of an injury is an injury equal to it, but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allah: for (Allah) does not love those who are unjust.” (Ash-Shura 42:39-40)

((وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (133) الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالصَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ)) آل عمران: 134-133

And race with one with another towards forgiveness from your Lord, and towards a paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who have Taqwa; (133) Those who suppress their anger and forgive others—

Allah loves those who do good. (Al-Emran 3:133-134)

4/ Conceal others' faults and sins. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : " ---- ومن ستر مؤمنا ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة ---- ")
(رواه مسلم)

“Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter”. (Muslim)

5/ Don't publicize your sins The Prophet (PBUH) said:

في الصحيحين من حديث أبي هريرة . رضي الله عنه . أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : " كل أمتي معافي إلا المجاهرين... " (رواه البخاري ومسلم)

“Every one of my followers will be forgiven except those who expose their sins...” (Bukhari and Muslim)

6/ Make frequent istighfār (seeking forgiveness). The Prophet (PBUH) Said:

عن أبي هريرة - رضي الله عنه - قال : سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : "والله إني لأستغفر الله , وأتوب إليه في اليوم أكثر من سبعين مرة" (رواه البخاري) .

“By Allah, I seek Allah’s forgiveness more than seventy times a day.” (Bukhari)

7/ Seek forgiveness as a solution to all problems. Imam Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣri advised people with different issues—drought, poverty, infertility—to seek Allah’s forgiveness, citing the words of Prophet Nuḥ (AS):

((فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا (10) يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا (11) وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَيَبِينْ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا ﴿ نوح: 10-12

“I (Nuh) said: Ask forgiveness from your Lord; for He is Oft-Forgiving. (10) He will send rain in abundance. (11) And increase your wealth and children, and grant you gardens and rivers.” (Nuh 71:10-12)

8/ Seek forgiveness during the pre-dawn hours. Allah praises those who rise early to seek forgiveness:

((وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ)) آل عمران: 17

“Those who seek forgiveness in the pre-dawn hours” (Al-Emran 3:17)

((وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ)) الذاريات: 18

“And in the hours before dawn they used to ask forgiveness;” (Al-Dhariyat 51:18)

Al-Hameed (الحميد) - The Praiseworthy

The name Al-Hameed appears frequently in the Quran, both alone and alongside other divine names such as Al-Ghani (The Self-Sufficient), Al-Aziz (The Almighty), Al-Wali (The Guardian), Al-Majeed (The Glorious), and Al-Hakeem (The All-Wise).

Al-Hameed comes from the root ḥ-m-d (حمد), meaning praise, thanks, and appreciation. It is broader than Al-Shakoor (The Appreciative), which refers specifically to gratitude in return for favors. Al-Hamd (الحمد) denotes praise due to the praiseworthiness of one's essence or attributes, not merely for specific actions. Thus, Allah is Al-Hameed—worthy of all praise at all times, in all circumstances.

There are three Dimensions of the Name Al-Hameed:

1/ Deserving of Praise in All States: Allah is praised not only for His blessings, but even in hardship—because we trust in His wisdom. Any affliction may be a mercy, as Allah says:

((وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُمْ مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَلْوَنِ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْجِعُونَ)) السجدة: 21

“We shall certainly make them taste the lesser punishment before the greater punishment, so they may return (to righteousness).” (As-Sajdah 32:21)

2/ He Guides, Rewards, and Praises Good Deeds: Allah provides us with opportunities, inspires us to act righteously, and then praises and rewards us. Just as a father might praise a child for using the money he gave

to buy a gift for his mother, Allah praises us for good actions—though all resources are from Him.

3/ He Rightfully Praises Himself: Unlike humans, Allah's self-praise is necessary and true, so we may know Him and seek His help. His praise reflects His perfection, not arrogance. To illustrate: imagine a wealthy man offering help to someone in need but being dismissed because his appearance gives no sign of wealth. If he reveals his status, it's not to boast, but to inform—so that others recognize his ability to help. Likewise, when Allah praises Himself, it is so we recognize His greatness, turn to Him in times of need, and rely on Him fully.

Reflection on the verses in which Allah's name Al-Hameed is mentioned:

1/ Allah's name Al-Hameed (الحميد) came associated with pure speech and the path to Allah:

((وَهَدُوا إِلَى الطَّيِّبِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَهَدُوا إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْحَمِيدِ)) الحج:

24

“They have been guided to good speech, and guided to the path of the Praiseworthy.” (Al-Hajj 22:24)

While pure, respectful speech leads to Allah, improper speech has grave consequences. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“إن الرجل ليتكلم بالكلمة لا يلقى لها بالاً يهوي بها في جهنم سبعين خريفاً.” (الترمذي عن أبي هريرة)

“A person may say a word carelessly that will cause him to fall into Hellfire seventy years deep.” (Tirmidhi)

“لا يستقيم إيمان عبد حتى يستقيم قلبه ولا يستقيم قلبه حتى يستقيم لسانه” (أخرجه الإمام أحمد عن أنس بن مالك).

“The belief of a person will not be upright unless his heart is upright, and his heart will not be upright unless his tongue is upright.” (Ahmad)

2/ Allah’s name Al-Hameed came Associated with Allah’s name Al-Aziz (The Almighty):

((كَتَبْنَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ وَإِلَيْكَ لِنُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ)) إبراهيم: 1

“This is a Book that We have revealed to you, to bring people out of darkness into light, by the will of their Lord, to the path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy.” (Ibrahim 14:1)

Truth is one, but falsehood takes many forms—hence “light” is singular while “darkness” is plural.

3/ Allah’s name Al-Hameed came associated with Allah’s name Al-Wali (The Guardian):

((وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ ۗ وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ)) الشورى: 28

“He sends rain after despair and spreads His mercy. He is the Guardian, the Praiseworthy.” (Ash-Shura 42:28)

Allah defends and cares for the believers as their Wali (Guardian).

4/ Allah’s name Al-Hameed also came in association with the name Al-Majeed (The Glorious):

((قَالُوا أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ
إِنَّهُ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ)) هود: 73

“They said: "Do you (Sarah) wonder at Allah's decree? The mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, people of the house. Indeed, He is Praiseworthy, Glorious." (Hud 11:73)

This same phrase appears in the Prophet’s ﷺ taught du’a during tashahhud (salutation) for his family and the family of Prophet Ibrahim. The Prophet (PBUH) was asked by the companions on how can they do Salat on Ahl-Albayt? He (PBUH) answered:

عن البخاري من حديث كعب بن عجرة رضي الله عنه أنه قال :
سألنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقلنا : يا رسول الله كيف
الصلاة عليكم أهل البيت ؟ قال : “قولوا اللهم صل على محمد
وعلى آل محمد ، كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك
حميد مجيب ، اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما باركت
على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد “ .

Say: “O Allah, bless Mohammad and the members of his household as You have blessed Abraham and the members of his household. You are indeed Praiseworthy and Glorious.

**O Allah, be gracious unto Mohammad and the members of his household as You were gracious unto Abraham and the members of his household. You are indeed Praiseworthy and Glorious.”
(Bukhari)**

5/ The name Al-Hameed came associated with Al-Hakeem (The Wise)

((لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ
حَمِيدٍ)) فصلت: 42

“No falsehood can approach it from its front or from its behind: it is sent down by the All-Wise, the Worthy of all Praise.” (Fusulat 41:42)

Allah protects the Quran in its perfection and from any imperfection.

6/ The name Al-Hameed came associated with Al-Ghani (The Rich)

((يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ)) فاطر:

15

“O mankind! You are in need of Allah, while Allah is Free of need, Praiseworthy.” (Fater 35:15)

Our praise does not benefit Allah, but it benefits us.

Glorifying Allah with Hamd and Tasbeeh

Expressing gratitude to Allah by declaring His Hamd is often associated with declaring Allah’s perfection by saying Subhan Allah (سبحان الله). Therefore, we say (سبحان الله و بحمده) “Subhanallahi Wa Bihamdih”. Saying Subhan Allah means declaring the infinite perfection of Allah’s essence, names, attributes, and actions beyond any human measure. While it is difficult to translate Subhan Allah with simple words to reflect its meaning, it is often translated as “All Glory is to Allah.” The best words we express our gratitude to Allah by combining tasbih (glorification) and hamd (praise).

The most complete form of remembrance is combining praise (hamd) with glorification (tasbeeh):

"Subhanallahi wa bihamdih" (سبحان الله و بحمده)– Glory and praise be to Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

“كَلِمَتَانِ خَفِيفَتَانِ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ، ثَقِيلَتَانِ فِي الْمِيزَانِ، حَبِيبَتَانِ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ. ” (البخاري)
“Two phrases are light on the tongue, heavy on the scale, and beloved to Allah: Subhanallahil Azeem (Glory and praise to Allah, glory to Allah the Almighty).” (Bukhari)

The Prophet’s wife Juwairiyah bint Al-Harith (May Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن جويرية بنت الحارث رضي الله عنها أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : لقد قلت بعدك أربع كلمات ثلاث مرات لو وزنت بما قلت منذ اليوم لوزنتهن: “ سبحان الله وبحمده عدد خلقه ورضى نفسه وزنة عرشه ومداد كلماته.” (مسلم)

“I recited four phrases three times that outweigh everything you have said since morning: ‘Glory and praise be to Allah as much as the number of His creations, according to His pleasure, equal to the weight of His Throne, and the ink of His words.’” (Muslim)

Everything in the universe praises Allah in this way, even if we don’t perceive it:

((تَسْبِيحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ، وَلَكِن لَّا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا))
 الإسراء: 44

“The seven heavens and the earth and all within them glorify Him. There is not a thing that does not glorify Him with praise, though you do not understand their glorification. Surely, He is forbearing, Most Forgiving.” (Al-Isra 17:44)

The ultimate expression of gratitude in Paradise will be the same declaration we repeat daily in our prayers (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ) "All Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds."

((دَعْوَاهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ وَعَآخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)) يونس: 10

"Their call therein (in paradise) will be: 'Glory be to You, O Allah!' and their greeting will be 'Peace!' And the conclusion of their call will be: 'Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds!'" (Yunus 10:10)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. **Keep Your Tongue Constant in Praise:** Train yourself to regularly say *Alhamdulillah*—"All praise is due to Allah"—with reflection. Each time you say it, recall Allah's countless blessings. We often take basic gifts—like food, shelter, or sleep—for granted. The Prophet ﷺ said:

" مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ مُعَافًى فِي جَسَدِهِ آمِنًا فِي سِرِّيهِ عِنْدَهُ قُوتٌ يَوْمِهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا " (رواه الترمذي)

"Whoever wakes up with health in his body, safety in his surroundings, and food for his day—it is as if he owns the entire world." (Tirmidhi)

2. **Appreciate the Meaning of Hamd Through the Example of the Righteous**

Reflect on the humility of those before us. When a messenger from Azerbaijan visited Caliph

Omar ibn Al-Khattab expecting a grand meal, he was offered only bread and salt. Omar joyfully said: “*Alhamdulillah, this is a blessing.*” After finishing the meal, Omar said:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَجَعَلَنَا مُسْلِمِينَ

“All praise is due to Allah who fed us, gave us drink, and made us Muslims.”

Even the simplest of provisions deserve gratitude. How many of us would say *Alhamdulillah* if served only bread and salt for breakfast?

3. Acknowledge the Gifts Allah Has Given You:

Recognizing your talents is not arrogance if done with humility and sincerity. Allah grants gifts to individuals for the benefit of others. Don't hide your strengths—use them to serve the community. Likewise, support and uplift others in developing their own gifts.

4. Be Content in Every Situation: Gratitude is not limited to times of ease. True believers cycle between gratitude during blessings and patience during trials. When we are truly pleased with Allah in all circumstances, Allah is pleased with us.

((قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْقَوْمُ الْعَظِيمُ)) المائدة: 119

“Allah will say: "This is a day on which the truthful shall profit from their truthfulness. For them there are gardens beneath which rivers flow, their eternal home. Allah is pleased with them, and they are

pleased with Him—that is the greatest success.”
(Al-Maeda 5:119)

Imam Al-Shafi'i once saw a man circumambulating around the Kabbah saying: O' Allah, are you pleased with me. He told him: "Are you pleased with Allah? The man asked: "how can I be pleased with Allah? He said: **"You are pleased with Allah when your joy in hardship equals your joy in ease."**

- 5. Find Contentment Through Constant Praise:**
Achieving inner peace comes through consistent *Tasbeeh* (glorifying) and *Hamd* (praising) of Allah.

((وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا وَمِنْ آنَاءِ
اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَى)) طه: 130

"So, glorify and praise your Lord before sunrise, before sunset, and during parts of the night and day, so that you may be content." (Taha 20:130)

Al-Hayy (الحي) - The Ever Living and Al-Qayyum (القيوم) - The Self-Sustaining, The Sustainer of All

Al-Hayy refers to Allah's perfect, eternal life—without beginning or end. His existence is not dependent on anything, and He is the source of all life. Unlike human life, which begins from non-existence and ends in death, Allah's life is absolute and self-existent and thus He is also Al-Qayyum. Al-Qayyum has two key meanings:

1. Self-Sustaining – Allah needs nothing and no one. Nothing can affect or diminish His existence or attributes.
2. Sustainer of All – Everything in creation depends entirely on Him. He governs all affairs, upholds all existence, and maintains perfect justice.

These names are deeply connected to others like Al-Samad (الْصَّمَدُ) (The Self-Sufficient), Al-Muhaymin (الْمُهَيِّمُنُ) (The Guardian), and Al-Razzaq (الرَّزَّاقُ) (The Provider).

Al-Hayy and Al-Qayyum are mentioned together in three powerful verses:

((اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ)) البقرة: 255

Allah! There is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of all. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and on earth....” (Al-Baqarah 2: 255)

((اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ (2) نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ...))
آل عمران: 2-3

“Allah! There is no god but He, the Ever Living, the Sustainer of all. (2) He has sent down to you the Book in truth...” (Al-Emran 2:2-3)

((وَعَنْتِ أَلْوُجُوهُ لِلْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ حَمَلَ ظُلْمًا)) طه :

111

“All faces shall be humbled before the Ever Living, the Sustainer of all, and the loser is the one who carries injustice.” (Taha 20:111)

Al-Hayy also appears independently in two other verses:

((وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ)) الفرقان: 58

“Put your trust in the Ever-Living who does not die.” (Al-Fourqan 25:58)

((هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ)) غافر: 65

“He is the Ever-Living. There is no God but He. So call upon Him, devoting the religion sincerely to Him.” (Ghafir 40:65)

Only Allah is Al-Hayy. All other beings began from non-existence and eventually perish. He alone creates life and death:

((الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا)) الملك: 2

“He who created death and life to test which of you is better in deeds.” (Al-Mulk 67:2)

((هَلْ أُنبِئُ عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا))

الإنسان: 1

“There has come upon man a period in which he was nothing worth mentioning.” (Al-Insan 76:1)

((كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۗ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ)) القصص:

88

“Everything will perish except His Face. To Him belongs the Command, and to Him you (all) will return.” (Al-Qasas 28:88)

Trusting in anyone other than Allah is flawed, people die, disappear, or fail. But Allah, the Ever-Living, will always be there. That is why He says:

((وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ)) الفرقان: 58

"Put your trust in the Ever-Living who does not die." (Al-Fourqan 25:58)

As Al-Qayyum, Allah determines when things exist, how they live, and when they die. He sustains all creation moment by moment:

((وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا
وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا ۗ كُلٌّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ)) هود: 60

“There is no creature on earth but its provision is upon Allah. He knows its dwelling and its resting place. All is recorded in a clear Book.” (Hud 11:6)

These names together highlight Allah’s absolute independence and our complete dependence on Him—for life, sustenance, guidance, and ultimate return.

To appreciate the meaning of Al-Qayyum, imagine being responsible for sustaining just one street. You

would have to manage everyone's food, water, air, bodily functions (like breathing, digestion, circulation), and environmental factors such as oxygen levels and the ozone layer. You'd also need to care for every pregnant woman, provide milk for each newborn, and sustain every insect, bird, animal, and plant on that street—every second, without rest or error. Clearly, such a role would require endless power and zero need for rest.

Now consider that Allah is Al-Qayyum over the entire universe—across land, sea, and space. He sustains every being in every place, at all times.

((أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَائِمٌ عَلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ))

الرعد: 33

“Is He who watches over every soul and what it earns (like those false gods)? Yet they ascribe partners to Allah...” (Al-R’ad 13:33)

To fulfill this role, Allah must be free from fatigue: (لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ)

“Slumber does not overtake Him, nor does sleep....” (Al-Baqarah 2:255)

Nothing escapes His knowledge or control, not even for a split second. Were He to doze for a moment, the universe would collapse.

When Bani Israel asked Prophet Musa if Allah sleeps, Allah inspired him to place two glass bottles in a man's hands and have him hold them overnight. As the man slept, he dropped and broke them. This was a lesson—if the Sustainer of the universe were to sleep, everything would fall apart.

Consider Earth: it weighs around 6 billion trillion metric tons and travels around the sun at 67,000 miles/hour. A tiny lapse in speed or orbit would make life impossible. Yet Allah, Al-Qayyum, maintains it all with perfect precision.

In human terms, a slave stays awake to serve the master—not the other way around. But Allah, our Master, is awake every moment, sustaining us while we sleep. Who keeps your heart beating? Your lungs breathing? Your immune system alert while you rest? It is Allah, Al-Qayyum.

This is not just an intellectual truth but a deeply personal one: Allah says,

“Put your trust in the Ever-Living who does not die.” (Al-Furqan 25:58)

Allah doesn't just sustain—He owns and governs all:

لَهُ ۥ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۗ

“To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and on earth.” (Al-Baqarah 2:255)

اَللّٰهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيْلٌ (٦٢)

“Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Trustee over all things.” (Al-Zumar 39:62)

Since Allah is Al-Hayy Al-Qayyum, no one else deserves our worship, reliance, or love on par with Him. This is the essence of Tawheed (pure monotheism).

We are allowed to love others—for Allah (الحب في الله), but not with Allah (الحب مع الله). That is, we love righteous people, the Prophet (PBUH), the Qur'an, Ramadan, etc., because Allah loves them—not in place of or alongside Him.

Loving anything with Allah (الحب مع الله) is a form of hidden shirk (polytheism). If your love for someone leads you to disobey Allah, it becomes misplaced loyalty and hidden idolatry.

Abu Bakr (RA) exemplified true belief. When the Prophet (PBUH) died, he said:

من كان يعبد محمداً (من دون أي لقب) فإن محمداً قد مات ومن
كان يعبد الله فإن الله حي لا يموت

“Whoever worshipped Mohammad, Mohammad has died. But whoever worships Allah, Allah is Ever-Living and never dies”.

He loved the Prophet deeply but never confused love with worship. The Prophet (PBUH) warned:

أخوف ما أخاف على أمتي الشرك الخفي

“What I fear most for my Ummah is hidden shirk.”
(Ahmad)

True belief in Al-Hayy Al-Qayyum erases fear. Allah says:

سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ

“We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve because they associate partners with Allah...” (Al-Imran 3:151)

In contrast, belief brings peace:

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ
الْقُلُوبُ (الرعد)

“Those who believe and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah—verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.” (Al-Ra’d 13:28)

Death is merely a transition. The real question is: will you be among those who get to see Al-Hayy, the Ever-Living, in the Hereafter?

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاطِرَةٌ (٢٢) إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

“Some faces that Day shall be shining and radiant. (22) Looking at their Lord.” (Al-Qiyamah 75:22-23)

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (١٤) كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ
يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَّحْجُوبُونَ

“Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts. (14) But surely, on that Day, they will be veiled from seeing their Lord.” (Al-Mutafifeen 83:14-15)

Everything that happens—blessings or trials—is by His will and for a purpose. We seek no helper but Him:

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

“Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth? And besides Allah, you have no protector or helper.” (Al-Baqarah 2: 107)

This understanding distinguishes pure monotheism from hidden shirk. Whatever befalls us is only by His decree:

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

“Say: Nothing will ever befall us except what Allah has written for us. He is our Master. And in Allah, let the believers place their trust.” (At-Tawba 9:51)

Many scholars interpret Al-Hayy Al-Qayyum as part of Allah’s Greatest Name, the one that if invoked, guarantees a response. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : (اسْمُ اللَّهِ الْأَعْظَمُ فِي سُورَةِ الْقُرْآنِ ثَلَاثٌ : فِي " الْبَقَرَةِ " وَ " آلِ عِمْرَانَ " وَ " طه "). رواه ابن ماجه

“The greatest name of Allah is in three Surahs: Al-Baqarah, Al-Imran and Ta-Ha.” (Ibn Maajah)

In all three, Al-Hayy Al-Qayyum appears.

Another hadith confirms its power:A man invoked:

عن أنس رضي الله عنه أن رجلاً دعا فقال : اللهم إني أسألك بأن لك الحمد، لا إله إلا أنت المَنَّان، بديع السموات والأرض، يا ذا الجلال والإكرام، يا حيُّ يا قيوم، فقال النبي ﷺ : «لقد دعا باسمه الأعظم الذي إذا دُعِيَ به أجاب، وإذا سُئِلَ به أعطى.»

“O Allah, I ask You by the fact that all praise is Yours. There is no god but You, the Bestower, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the Possessor of Majesty and Honor, Ya Hayy, Ya Qayyum.”

The Prophet (PBUH) said: **“He has called upon Allah by His Greatest Name. When He is called by it, He responds, and when He is asked by it, He gives.”** (Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood, An-Nasa’i)

Elements to Adopt in our Character

1. Call Upon Allah with These Names in Times of Hardship: Understand the power of the names Al-Hayy (The Ever-Living) and Al-Qayyum (The Sustainer of All), and use them in your supplications during difficulty. The Prophet ﷺ would say in times of distress:

كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا كربه أمر قال: "يا حي يا قيوم برحمتك أستغيث" (ابن حبان)

"Ya Hayy, Ya Qayyum, I seek refuge in Your mercy." (Ibn Hibban)

He also advised his daughter Fatimah to say each morning and evening:

عن أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه قال : قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لفاطمة رضي الله عنها : قولي إذا أصبحت وإذا أمسيت : " يا حي يا قيوم برحمتك أستغيث ، أصلح لي شأني كله ، ولا تكلني إلى نفسي طرفة عين ". [رواه النسائي والحاكم والبيهقي ، وغيرهم.]

"Ya Hayy Ya Qayyum, by Your mercy I seek assistance. Rectify all of my affairs and do not leave me to myself, even for the blink of an eye."

Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim said: "Calling on Allah by these two names has a powerful impact in relieving hardship and reviving your strength—whether physical, emotional, or spiritual".

2. Revive Your Heart Spiritually: Call upon Al-Hayy to bring life to your heart. A living heart recognizes truth, feels remorse for sin, and draws nearer to Allah. A dead heart feels

nothing. Keep your heart alive with remembrance, prayer, and sincere repentance.

3. Trust That Allah Will Sustain You: Have full reliance on Al-Hayy Al-Qayyum, who never neglects His creation. Reflect on His perfection and constant care. Whatever you need—health, sustenance, guidance—He is the source and sustainer.

((وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا...)) هود: 6

“There is no creature on earth but that upon Allah is its provision,” (Hud 11:6)

4. Be a Support to Others: Embody the spirit of Qayyumiyyah by supporting others in their needs. Extend your help wherever you can, ease people’s burdens, and be a source of strength and stability for your family and community. The prophet (PBUH) said:

" من نفس عن مؤمن كربة من كرب الدنيا، نفس الله عنه كربة من كرب يوم القيامة، ومن يسر على معسر يسر الله عليه في الدنيا والآخرة، ومن ستر مسلماً ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة، والله في عون العبد ما كان العبد في عون أخيه. " (مسلم)

“He who removes from a believer one of his difficulties of this world, Allah will remove one of his troubles on the Day of Resurrection; and he who finds relief for a hard-pressed person, Allah will make things easy for him on the Day of Resurrection; he who covers up (the faults and sins) of a Muslim, Allah will cover up (his faults and sins) in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah supports His slave as long as the slave is supportive of his brother”. (Muslim)

The Glorious Names of Allah

Several of the Glorious Names that are listed below have not yet been included in this edition of the book. The author intends to address these additional names in a future edition.":

1	Allah (الله)	The Greatest Name
2	Ar-Rahman (الرحمن)	The All-Compassionate
3	Ar-Rahim (الرحيم)	The All-Merciful
4	Al-Malik (الملك)	The Absolute Ruler
5	Al-Quddus (القدوس)	The Pure One
6	As-Salam (السلام)	The Source of Peace
7	Al-Mu'min (المؤمن)	The Inspirer of Faith
8	Al-Muhaymin (المهيمن)	The Guardian
9	Al-Aziz (العزيز)	The Victorious
10	Al-Jabbar (الجبار)	The Compeller
11	Al-Mutakabbir (المتكبر)	The Greatest
12	Al-Khaliq (الخالق)	The Creator
13	Al-Bari' (البارئ)	The Maker of Order
14	Al-Musawwir (المصور)	The Shaper of Beauty
15	Al-Ghaffar (الغفار)	The Forgiving
16	Al-Qahhar (القهار)	The Subduer
17	Al-Wahhab (الوهاب)	The Giver of All
18	Ar-Razzaq (الرزاق)	The Sustainer
19	Al-Fattah (الفتاح)	The Opener
20	Al-'Alim (العليم)	The Knower of All
21	Al-Qabid (القابض)	The Constrictor
22	Al-Basit (الباسط)	The Reliever
23	Al-Khafid (الخافض)	The Abaser
24	Ar-Rafi (الرافع)	The Exalter
25	Al-Mu'izz (المعز)	The Bestower of Honors
26	Al-Mudhill (المذل)	The Humiliator
27	As-Sami (السميع)	The Hearer of All
28	Al-Basir (البصير)	The Seer of All
29	Al-Hakam (الحكم)	The Judge

30	Al-'Adl (العدل)	The Just
31	Al-Latif (اللطيف)	The Subtle One
32	Al-Khabir (الخبير)	The All-Aware
33	Al-Halim (الحليم)	The Forbearing
34	Al-Azim (العظيم)	The Magnificent
35	Al-Ghafur (الغفور)	The Forgiver and Hider of
Faults		
36	Ash-Shakur (الشكور)	The Rewarder of
Thankfulness		
37	Al-Ali (العلی)	The Highest
38	Al-Kabir (الكبير)	The Greatest
39	Al-Hafiz (الحفيظ)	The Preserver
40	Al-Muqit (المقيت)	The Nourisher
41	Al-Hasib (الحسيب)	The Accounter
42	Al-Jalil (الجليل)	The Mighty
43	Al-Karim (الكريم)	The Generous
44	Ar-Raqib (الرقيب)	The Watchful One
45	Al-Mujib (المجيب)	The Responder to Prayer
46	Al-Wasi (الواسع)	The All-Comprehending
47	Al-Hakim (الحكيم)	The Perfectly Wise
48	Al-Wadud (الودود)	The Loving One
49	Al-Majid (المجيد)	The Majestic One
50	Al-Ba'ith (الباعث)	The Resurrector
51	Ash-Shahid (الشهيد)	The Witness
52	Al-Haqq (الحق)	The Truth
53	Al-Wakil (الوكيل)	The Trustee
54	Al-Qawiyy (القوى)	The Possessor of All Strength
55	Al-Matin (المتين)	The Forceful One
56	Al-Waliyy (الولى)	The Governor
57	Al-Hamid (الحميد)	The Praised One
58	Al-Muhsi (المحصى)	The Appraiser
59	Al-Mubdi' (المبدئ)	The Originator
60	Al-Mu'id (المعيد)	The Restorer
61	Al-Muhyi (المحيى)	The Giver of Life
62	Al-Mumit (المميت)	The Taker of Life

63	Al-Hayy (الحي)	The Ever Living One
64	Al-Qayyum (القيوم)	The Self-Existing One
65	Al-Wajid (الواجد)	The Finder
66	Al-Majid (الماجد)	The Glorious
67	Al-Wahid (الواحد)	The One, the All Inclusive,
The Indivisible		
68	As-Samad (الصمد)	The Satisfier of All Needs
69	Al-Qadir (القادر)	The All Powerful
70	Al-Muqtadir (المقتدر)	The Creator of All Power
71	Al-Muqaddim (المقدم)	The Expediter
72	Al-Mu'akhkhir (المؤخر)	The Delayer
73	Al-Awwal (الأول)	The First
74	Al-Akhir (الأخر)	The Last
75	Az-Zahir (الظاهر)	The Manifest One
76	Al-Batin (الباطن)	The Hidden One
77	Al-Wali (الوالي)	The Protecting Friend
78	Al-Muta'ali (المتعالى)	The Supreme One
79	Al-Barr (البر)	The Doer of Good
80	At-Tawwab (التواب)	The Guide to Repentance
81	Al-Muntaqim (المنتقم)	The Avenger
82	Al-'Afuww (العفو)	The Forgiver
83	Ar-Ra'uf (الرؤوف)	The Clement
84	Malik-al-Mulk (مالك الملك)	The Owner of All
85	Dhu-al-Jalal wa-al-Ikram (ذو الجلال و الإكرام)	The Lord of Majesty and Bounty
86	Al-Muqsit (المقسط)	The Equitable One
87	Al-Jami' (الجامع)	The Gatherer
88	Al-Ghani (الغنى)	The Rich One
89	Al-Mughni (المغنى)	The Enricher
90	Al-Mani' (المانع)	The Preventer of Harm
91	Ad-Darr (الضار)	The Creator of The Harmful
92	An-Nafi' (النافع)	The Creator of Good
93	An-Nur (النور)	The Light
94	Al-Hadi (الهادي)	The Guide
95	Al-Badi (البيديع)	The Originator

96	Al-Baqi (الباقِي)	The Everlasting One
97	Al-Warith (الوارِث)	The Inheritor of All
98	Ar-Rashid (الرَشِيد)	The Righteous Teacher
99	As-Sabur (الصَبُور)	The Patient One

About the Author

Dr. Mamdouh M. Salama is a Life Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and a retired Senior Engineering Fellow from a major oil company. He earned his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering with highest distinction in Egypt, followed by M.S. and Sc.D. degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

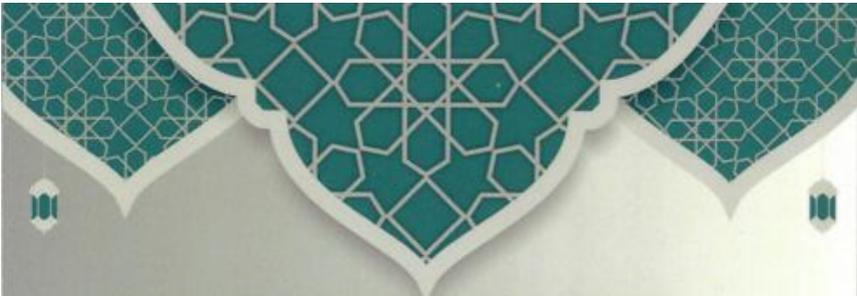
Over his distinguished career, Dr. Salama authored over 150 technical papers, received 25 patents, and edited more than 30 international conference proceedings. He chaired numerous conferences on Offshore and Arctic developments and was the recipient of multiple industry awards.

Beyond engineering, Dr. Salama is an active speaker at Islamic centers in Houston, where he delivers Friday khutbahs and weekend lectures. He has authored articles on Islam in various newspapers and given talks to both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences.

He is the author of *Your Reflection in the Mirror of Islam*, reviewed and approved by the Al-Azhar Religious Committee for distribution in the West. He is currently working on several new books drawn from his lectures, including:

- *Tadabbur of the Quran through the Lens of Key Terms*
- *From Al-Fatiha to An-Nas: The Central Theme of Every Surah*
- *The Memoirs of the Prophet (PBUH)*
- *The Qur'an: A Blueprint for Civilization and Salvation*

These works reflect his dedication to bridging scholarly insight and spiritual reflection through the guidance of the Qur'an and Prophetic teachings.



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Through knowing Him, you will come to know yourself.

And through that knowing... you will find your way home.



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