

**A Universal Guide
to the
Foundational Principles
and
Primary Aims
of
Islam**

Questions and Answers

with

an introduction and special recommendation that it be translated

given by

His Excellence Shaikh Abdul-Aziz bin Abdullah Aali Al-Shaikh

a revision and introduction for the original

by

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ردمك:

Foreword of His Excellence, the Grand Mufti of the Kingdom

All praise is due to Allah¹, the Lord of all the worlds; and may peace and special blessings be upon our Prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family and all of his companions.

Herein, I'd like to emphasize that I have indeed looked through the book " إرشاد الأنام إلى أصول ومهمات دين الإسلام " (A Universal Guide to the Foundational Principles and the Primary Aims of Islam) which is authored by Dr. Omar ibn AbdurRahman Al-Omar, and it, in spite of its conciseness, consists of the most important affairs concerning the topics of Islamic monotheism (tauheed), as well as the core creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* (Muslims who stick to the teachings and tradition of Prophet Muhammad and with the Upright Group of Muslims). It also contains the rules of ritual ablution, *Salah* (obligatory prayers), *Zakah* (annual Islamic poor-rate), *Sawm* (fasting), and *Hajj* (the major pilgrimage to Makkah) – all quite concisely.

Truly, I have found it to be a very beneficial book in its subject matter, which has been arranged in a question and answer format and simple language making it a very comprehensible, easy read for all. This is a book which should be translated into other languages for the benefit of non-Arabic speakers.

In closing, may Allah grant His special blessings and peace to our Prophet Muhammad; and may peace, the mercy of God, and His blessings be upon you all.

*The Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Head of the Board of Major Scholars, President of Research and Religious Verdicts
Abdulaziz ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad Aali Al-Shaykh*

¹ TN: The terms *Allah* and *God* will be used interchangeably in this work.

**Foreword of the Eminent, Renowned Scholar,
Salih ibn Fawzan ibn Abdullah Al-Fawzan**
Member of the Board of Major Scholars

In the name of Allah the Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

To start, all praise is due to God. Herein, I would like to mention that I have looked through the work of Shaikh Omar ibn AbdurRahman Al-Omar entitled, “إرشاد الأتنام إلى أصول” ومهمات دين الإسلام (A Universal Guide to the Foundational Principles and the Primary Aims of Islam). I have indeed found the book very beneficial and informative in spite of how short it is. Therefore, may Allah reward him greatly and may He grant tremendous benefit by way of this book.

In closing, may Allah grant His special blessings to our Prophet Muhammad and to his family and companions.

Written by,
Salih ibn Fawzan Al-Fawzan
Member of the Board of Supreme Scholars
10/02/1437 Hijri

Foreword of the Eminent Scholar,

Shaykh Salih ibn Abdulaziz ibn Muhammad Aali Al-Shaykh
Minister of Islamic Affairs, Propagation and Guidance

All praise belongs to God, the Lord of all worlds, and may special blessings and peace be upon the most noble of the prophets and messengers.

With that in mind, I have taken a good look through the treatise entitled "A Universal Guide to the Fundamental Principles and Primary Aims of Islam" written by the eminent scholar, Dr. Omar ibn AbdurRahman Al-Omar, and I have found it very comprehensive, covering essential affairs which every Muslim needs to know concerning sound creed and the correct worship of God.

The author (may God give him success) did an excellent job in his selection and variation of topics. He also did an exemplary job keeping the book concise, providing evidences from the Quran and Sunnah for the information provided, and presenting it all in a Question & Answer format.

May Allah reward the author and grant him fabulous recompense, and bless others to benefit from his knowledge. May the special blessings of Allah and everlasting peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and companions.

Written by:

Salih Ibn Abdulaziz ibn Muhammad Aali Al-Shaykh
The Minister of Islamic Affairs, Propagation and Guidance

Foreword of the Author

All praise is due to Allah, who has guided us to *Tauheed*⁽¹⁾ and the *Sunnah*⁽²⁾; and may His special blessings and peace be upon the Prophet of guidance and mercy, our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and companions.

Indeed, learning *Tauheed* and correct belief, as well as the pillars of the religion, are among the most important tasks and the most emphasized of all obligations; this is in order to ensure that one's *aqeedah*⁽³⁾ is sound, and for one's worship to be correct worship as prescribed by God, directed only to Him, and which is in accordance with the guidelines provided by His messenger (peace and blessings be upon him). It is for this reason that I have written this concise book, based on the Qur'an, Sunnah and that which noteworthy scholars of Islam, and the foremost leaders of *dawah*⁽⁴⁾ have written in very beneficial and profound writings of theirs. I have named this book of mine " **إرشاد الأتنام إلى أصول و مهمات دين الإسلام** " (A Universal Guide to the Foundational Principles and the Primary Aims of Islam), and I have divided it into different chapters in a Question & Answer format for the purpose of making it easier to understand, and comprehend the truth.

And I ask Allah, the Exalted, to bless this work to have been done strictly for His Face, effectively in line with all that pleases Him, beneficial to His slaves (all of mankind).

In closing, may God grant His special blessings and peace to our Prophet Muhammad and to both his family and companions.

⁽¹⁾ TN: Tauheed: Islamic monotheism

⁽²⁾ TN: Sunnah: The teachings and tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

⁽³⁾ TN: Aqeedah: the beliefs or a particular system of beliefs

⁽⁴⁾ TN: Dawah: Propagation of Islam

Chapter One: The Three Basic Fundamentals

Q1: What are the three basic fundamentals which a Muslim must know?

The three basic fundamentals which a Muslim must know are as follows:

1. Knowledge of one's true Lord (Sustainer and Creator).
2. Knowledge of one's religion.
3. Knowledge of one's Prophet, God's Last Prophet, Muhammad -- may peace and the blessings of Allah be on him.

Q2: Who is your true Lord? What is the proof?

My true Lord is Allah, who sustains me and the entire universe with his bounties. He is the one that I worship; I worship no one else. The related proof is His, the Exalted's, statement,

“All praise is due to God, the Lord of all worlds”.

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Fatihah: 1]

Q3: How do you know your true Lord? What is the proof?

I know Allah, my true Lord and Sustainer, by His signs and His creations; among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon; the related proof is His, the Exalted's statement,

“And of His signs are the night and the day, as well as the sun and the moon”. [The Qur'an, Chapter Fusilat: 37]

Whereas, among His creations are the seven heavens and the seven earths, as well as the things that are in them and

between them; the related proof is His, the Exalted's statement,

“Allah is the One who has created the heavens above and the earth”. [The Qur'an, Chapter Ibrahim: 32]

Q4: What is your religion? What is the proof?

My religion is Islam, which means to surrender to Allah by worshipping Him alone, to submit to His orders through obedience to Him; and to hold firmly that polytheism is disbelief, and that polytheists are clearly upon a destructive path in their polytheism. The related proof is His, the Exalted's, statement,

“And whosoever desires a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he will be among the losers”. [The Qur'an, Chapter Aali Imran: 85]

Q5: What are the different categories of Islam?

There are three **primary** aspects of the Islamic religion:

- 1) Islam (submission and surrendering to God)
- 2) Iman (firm faith)
- 3) Ihsan (superior level of faith)

Q6: Who is the Last Prophet of God to all mankind? What is the proof?

The last Prophet of God who was sent to all mankind is Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Bin AbdulMuttalib bin Hashim; and Hashim is from Quraish, and Quraish are Arab, and Arabs are from the sons of Ishmael son of Abraham -- may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him and upon our Prophet Muhammad. The proof of this is in His (God's)

statement,

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men but the Messenger of God and the final of all prophets”.

[The Quran, Chapter Al-Ahzab : 40]

Chapter Two: The Pillars of Islam and the Meaning of the Two-Part Testimony of Faith

Q7: What are the pillars of Islam?

The pillars of Islam are five:

- 1 – To witness that there is no true God but Allah and that Muhammad is the last messenger of God
- 2 – To perform the obligatory five daily prayers
- 3 – To pay Zakat (the annual Islamic poor-rate)
- 4 – To fast during the month of Ramadan
- 5 – To perform Hajj (the pilgrimage to the sacred house of Allah in Makkah for particular prayers and rituals, if one is able).

Q8: What does it mean to witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah⁽¹⁾, and what is the supporting proof?

The meaning of the testimony “There is no god worthy of worship except Allah” is that no god truly deserves to be worshipped except Allah alone.

The proof of it is the saying of Allah, the Exalted:

((ذلك بأن الله هو الحق وأن ما يدعون من دونه هو الباطل

وأن الله هو العلي الكبير)) [الحج:٦٢].

“That is because Allah is the Truth, and because that

⁽¹⁾TN: We use the terms Allah and its English translation “God” interchangeably referring to the One True God.

which they call upon besides Him is falsehood, and because Allah is the Most High, the Most Great”

[Surah Al-Hajj: 62]

Q9: What are the requisite aspects of the testimony that “There is no god truly worthy of worship other than Allah”, and what is the related proof?

The requisites of the testimony that “There is none truly worthy of worship other than God” are two:

The first: negation, which is in the phrase “There is none truly worthy of worship”.

The second: affirmation, which is in the phrase “other than Allah”

The proof for this is in the statement of God, the Exalted:

((فمن يكفر بالطاغوت ويؤمن بالله فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقى)) [البقرة: ٢٥٦]

“So, whoever rejects false gods and believes in God, he has grabbed ahold of the most reliable handle (creed and way of life)” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 256]

His statement, “So, whoever rejects false gods” is proof for the negation, and His statement, “and believes in God” is proof for the affirmation.

Q10: What are the prerequisites of the testimony that “There is no god truly worthy of worship except Allah”?

The prerequisites of the testimony that “There is no god truly worthy of worship except Allah” are eight:

1- Clear knowledge of its meaning, knowledge which

has removed ignorance and/or misunderstanding concerning its true meaning.

- 2- Absolute faith in it, void of any doubt.
- 3- Sincere dedication to the one true God, free of any polytheism.
- 4- Genuine truthfulness, free of dishonesty.
- 5- Deep love, negating any contempt.
- 6- Full submission, void of inhibitions.
- 7- Complete acceptance, excluding nothing of its true implications.
- 8- Rejection of all that is worshipped other than Allah.

These points were collected in a couple of verses of poetry as follows:

*Knowledge, certainty, sincerity, and honesty
Coupled with love, submission and whole-hearted
acceptance,
Including the eighth of them, your rejection of all
Which is worshipped other than The One True God*

Q11: What does the declaration that “There is no god worthy of worship except Allah” necessitate?

It necessitates two matters:

1. Belief in God by affirming His Oneness, directing all forms of worship to Him alone (this is what the “affirmation” aspect of the testimony necessitates).
2. Rejection of all that is worshipped other than Allah (the One True God), and to hold firmly that polytheism is disbelief and that polytheists are clearly upon a destructive path in their polytheism, along with avoiding those things which invalidate one’s Islam (and these are affairs which the “negation” aspect of the testimony necessitates).

Q12: What does the testimony that, “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah”, mean?

The testimony that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah means to confess that Muhammad is the slave of Allah and His Messenger to all mankind – and that he is the last of all the prophets and messengers of God.

Q13: What does the testimony that “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” necessitate?

The testimony that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah necessitates that one obeys the Prophet Muhammad’s commands, fully believing in all that he has said, along with refraining from that which he has prohibited -- as it also necessitates that one only worships God in accordance with the manners and ways outlined and approved by the Prophet Muhammad.

Chapter Three: The Pillars and Primary Benefits of Faith

Q14: What are the pillars of *Iman* (Faith/Belief)?

The pillars of *Iman* (Faith) are six:

1. Belief in Allah, the Exalted
2. Belief in the angels
3. Belief in the Scriptures of Allah
4. Belief in the messengers sent by Allah
5. Belief in the Last Day
6. Belief in the Divine Decree -- that good and bad is ordained by Allah the Exalted

Q15: What does belief in Allah, The Almighty, mean?

Belief in Allah, the All-Mighty, is to affirm the existence of Allah, the Exalted, and to affirm His lordship and divinity, as well as His beautiful names and attributes.

Q16: What are the benefits of having such belief in Allah, the Exalted?

The benefits of belief in Allah, the Exalted, are many, including:

1. Practice of true monotheism: worshipping only Allah without ascribing any partner to Him.
2. Loving Allah, the Exalted, with all of the heart, revering and fearing Him as is due to Him, venerating His lofty names and attributes.
3. Fulfilling the requisite of true worship of Allah:

doing what is commanded by Allah and abstaining from what He has forbidden.

Q17: What does it mean to believe in the Angels?

Belief in the Angels is to affirm their existence and that they are honorable slaves of Allah; they do not disobey Allah; rather, they do precisely what they are commanded. So, we believe in the angels which Allah has mentioned by name, such as Gabriel, Mikael and Israfil, as well as the angels which are not mentioned by name.

Q18: What are the benefits of belief in the angels?

The benefits of believing in angels are many, including:

1. More knowledge of the greatness of Allah, the Exalted, His power and His kingship, because the greatness of a creature is an undeniable testament to the greatness of its creator. Examples of this is in: the tremendous amount of angels there are, the extraordinary creation of the angel Gabriel – peace be upon him – as well as in the amazing creation of the angels who carry the throne of God.
2. More love for Allah and more gratitude towards Him, resulting from a greater awareness of His compassion towards human beings: He has designated some of the angles to be responsible for guarding each human.
3. It encourages people to do good deeds and avoid evil deeds since Allah has designated some of the angels for writing and recording all of the deeds of human beings, whether good or bad.

Q19: What does belief in the Scriptures of Allah mean?

Belief in the Scriptures of God is to confirm that the Scriptures revealed to the messengers of God are from Him, that they are all His Word, and that they are true and a form of light (guidance); therefore, we believe in the Books and Scriptures which God has named such as the Qur'an, the Torah, the Gospel, and the Psalms, as well as those which are not mentioned.

Q20: What are the benefits of belief in the Scriptures of God?

The benefits of belief in the Scriptures of God are many:

1. To know that Allah cares for His slaves -- as He has sent for every nation a Scripture to guide them.
2. To know more of Allah's wisdom through His laws -- as He has legislated for each nation that which suits them, as Allah, the Exalted, said:

((لكل جعلنا منكم شرعة ومنهاجاً)) [المائدة: ٤٨].

“For each of you, we have prescribed a law and a suitable way for handling affairs”.

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Maidah: 48]

3. To pay gratitude to Allah for the special blessing -- that He has made clear for mankind the proper way to worship Him.
4. Worshipping Allah the Exalted in light of the revealed Books as well as by following His Messengers.

Q21: What does belief in the Messengers of God mean?

Belief in the Messengers of God is to confirm the divine revelation and teachings with which they were sent. Therefore, we believe in those messengers whom Allah has named such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, and Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all), as well as those whom were not mentioned by name.

Q22: What are the benefits of belief in the Messengers of God?

The benefits of belief in the Messengers of God are many:

1. Knowing Allah's Mercy and His Care towards His slaves -- as He sent Messengers to guide them to the right path.
2. Worshipping Allah, the Exalted, upon the light (guidance) of the revealed Books of God and through following His Messengers.
3. Loving the Messengers of God, peace be upon them, respecting and honoring them greatly, praising them in a manner which suits them, because they delivered the revelation of God to people.
4. Paying more gratitude to Allah, the Exalted, for His great bounties.

Q23: What does it mean to believe in the Last Day?

Belief in the Last Day is to believe and confirm firmly the Day for which all people are resurrected and the day on which they will all be subject to account and recompense.

Q24: What are the benefits of belief in the Last Day?

The benefits of belief in the Last Day include the following:

1. It increases one's desire to do good deeds with the hopes

of being greatly rewarded on that Day.

2. It increases one's fear of doing evil, built upon the fear of punishment on the Last Day.
3. It motivates believers, teaching them not to grieve for what they may miss of worldly pleasures, and to have great hope for all of the good in the Hereafter.

Q25: What is the meaning of the Divine Decree (that good or bad is preordained by Allah)?

Belief in Divine Decree is to firmly believe that God knows all things before they even happen, and that He recorded it in *Al-Lauh Al-Mahfooth* (a preserved divine record); all that happens is by His will and He is the creator of it all.

Q26: What are the benefits of belief in the Divine Decree?

The benefits of belief in the Divine Decree are many:

1. It cultivates in an individual total dependence upon Allah, relying on Him when utilizing worldly means, because Allah is the creator of those means, and He has created everything with precise measure -- glory be to Him.
2. It develops contentment in an individual with whatever happens: it does not allow him to grieve about anything, whether he misses out on something he would have liked to have, or even if something that he is displeased with occurs.
3. It enhances the bravery of an individual to move forward and face crisis, to receive this life's challenges with a strong heart and with absolute certainty concerning truth.
4. It prevents an individual from becoming conceited when he succeeds in accomplishing something, because he understands that he has only accomplished it by Allah's Decree and due to Allah's facilitating his success as an act of grace from Him (God).

Chapter Four: *Ihsan* and its Results

Q27: What is the meaning of *Ihsan* (superior level of faith and worship)?

It means to worship Allah as if you see Him and even though you cannot see Him (in this life), know that he sees you.

Q28: What are the levels of *Ihsan* (superior level of faith and worship)?

Ihsan consists of two levels:

The first level: The *heart-witness* level, which is when a slave of God worships His Lord as if he sees Him. This is the higher of the two levels.

The second level: The *diligent-observance* level, which is when a slave of God acknowledges that God sees him wherever he is, and sees every action he does.

Q29: What are the benefits of *Ihsan* (superior level of faith and worship)?

The benefits of *Ihsan* are many:

1. Fearing Allah, the Exalted, concerning affairs which are unseen by mankind and those which are actually witnessed by mankind, in secret and in public.
2. Sincerity of worship for Allah, the Exalted, doing one's utmost to perform acts of worship in the right way and in a complete manner.
3. A special nearness to Allah which is only for those foremost in doing good deeds.
4. The ultimate reward of Paradise and seeing Allah, the Exalted.

Chapter Five: *Tauheed* and its Virtues

Q30: What is the meaning of *Tauheed*⁽¹⁾ and what are its categories?

Tauheed is attributing God's attributes to Him alone and none other. The categories of *Tauheed* are three:

1. *Tauheed Ar-Rububiyah* (belief in Allah's exclusive lordship).
2. *Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah* (belief that no one deserves to be worshipped except Allah).
3. *Tauheed Al-Asma and As-Sifat* – (belief in the exclusivity of Allah's Lofty Names and Sublime Attributes).

Q31: What is the meaning of *Tauheed Ar-Rububiyah* (Belief in God's exclusive lordship)?

The meaning of *Tauheed* of Lordship is to affirm that Allah is One and unique in his actions, such as the acts of creating, providing provision, ruling, regulating and disposing the affairs of all of creation.

Q32: Does it suffice a Muslim to affirm *Tauheed Ar-Rububiyah* (God's exclusive lordship) in order to embrace Islam as one's religion?

Affirming Allah's Lordship alone is not sufficient to embrace Islam as one's religion, because some disbelievers during the time of the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be

⁽¹⁾TN: *Tauheed*: Belief in the pure Oneness of Allah and properly applying that belief in action/worship as legislated by Allah and His Messenger.

upon him, affirmed this aspect of Tauheed, but it did not benefit them. The proof of this is in the saying of Allah, the Exalted:

((ولئن سألتهم من خلقهم ليقولن الله فأنى يؤفكون))

[الزخرف: ٨٧].

“And if you ask them who created them, they will certainly say: “Allah”. How are they then turned away”.
(The Quran, Chapter Al-Zukhruf: 87)

Q33: What is the meaning of the Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah (Unification in Worship)?

Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah means that all forms of worship should be directed only to Allah. It is also said: It is singling out God for all acts of worship which is the essential meaning of the testimony, “There is no god worthy of worship except Allah”.

Q34: What is the importance of Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah?

1. Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah (The Belief that no one deserves to be worshipped except Allah) is the actual purpose for the creation of the human being and the jinn.
2. Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah is the ultimate goal of the message and teachings of all of the messengers and the prophets of God.
3. Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah (the belief that no one deserves to be worshipped except Allah) is the right of Allah upon His slaves.
4. Tauheed Al-Uluhiyah (The Belief that no one deserves to be worshipped except Allah) is the fundamental requirement which validates actions of worship.

Q35: What is the meaning of Tauheed Al-Asma and As-Sifat (belief in the exclusivity of Allah’s Lofty Names and Sublime Attributes)?

Tauheed al-Asma and As-Sifat is to affirm that Allah is one and unique in His Names and Attributes, without distorting their meanings or rendering them void of meaning, and by not delving into the “how” or likening Him to any of His creation.

Q36: What is the method of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaah⁽¹⁾ in Tauheed Al-Asma and As-Sifat?

The method of Ahluss-Sunnah wal-Jamaah in Tawheed Al-Asma and As-Sifat is to affirm what Allah has affirmed for Himself in His Book or as mentioned by His Prophet without likening anyone to Him, and to negate what Allah has negated about Himself in His Book or as mentioned by His Prophet; it is to glorify Him by declaring that He is far from any and all imperfections, while never rendering His names and attributes void of meaning. The proof for this is the saying of Allah, the Exalted:

((ليس كمثلہ شيءٌ وهو السميع البصير)) [الشورى: ١١]

“There is nothing whatsoever similar to Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.”

[The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Shura:11]

His saying: "There is nothing whatsoever similar to Him" prohibits likening anything to Allah; while the saying of Allah: "And He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing" prohibits rendering His names and attributes void of meaning.

⁽¹⁾TN: This phrase “Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah” refers to Muslims who adhere to the authentic teachings of Prophet Muhammad and who align themselves with the main body of Muslims who hold this approach as necessary.

Q37: What is the importance of Tauheed Al-Asma and As-Sifat (belief in the exclusivity of Allah's Lofty Names and Sublime Attributes)?

1. It brings about an increase of faith in Allah, the Exalted.
2. Knowledge of the Names and Attributes of Allah is the proper way to learn about Allah, the Exalted.
3. It strengthens one with regards to internal actions related to the heart such as one's love for Allah, the Exalted, and one's fear of Him, as well as one's hope for His Grace.
4. It prevents one from committing acts of likening Allah to His creation or rendering His names and attributes void of meaning such as those transgressions committed by the Jahmiah and the Mutazilah and the Ashariah (deviated sects of Muslims).

Q38: What are the virtues of Tauheed?

The virtues of Tauheed are many:

1. It is the greatest means for the prevention of bloodshed and protection of wealth.
2. It is true salvation from the hardships of this life and the next.
3. It brings about triumph over enemies and stability in this world.
4. Complete security in this life and the Hereafter
5. A good life in this world and a great reward in the Hereafter
6. Expiation of sins and bad deeds
7. Salvation from the Hellfire
8. Entering Paradise

Chapter Six: Apostasy

Q39: What does *Al-Ridda* (apostasy)⁽¹⁾ refer to? What is the related proof?

Ar-Ridda is for one to disbelieve after having already been Muslim. The related proof is in the statement of God, the Exalted:

((ومن یرتدد منکم عن دینہ فیمت وهو کافر فأولیک حببت أعمالهم فی الدنيا والآخرة وأولئک أصحاب النار هم فیها خالدون)) [البقرة: ٢١٧].

“And whoever amongst you apostates from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, those are the ones whose efforts and actions will be rendered ultimately fruitless in this life and in the Hereafter; they are the rightful inhabitants of Hell, in which they will dwell eternally.” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 217]

Q40: What are the categories of *Al-Ridda* (apostasy)?

Ar-Ridda consists of 5 categories:

- 1- Apostasy by way of speech
- 2- Apostasy by way of deeds
- 3- Apostasy by way of belief
- 4- Apostasy by way of doubt
- 5- Apostasy by way of abandonment (of a necessary aspect of Islam)

⁽¹⁾TN: *Ar-Ridda* is Arabic for “apostasy”. We will use the two words interchangeably in this chapter.

Q41: What are some examples of apostasy by way of speech?

Apostasy by way of speech occurs if a Muslim does one of the following:

- 1- Reviling God, the Exalted, or His Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him)
- 2- Mocking the noble Qur'an, or the authentic *Sunnah*, or any of the foremost, most manifest aspects of Islam.
- 3- Claiming to have knowledge of the unseen
- 4- Claiming prophecy
- 5- Calling on other than God to do that which only God is able to

Q42: What are some examples of apostasy by way of deeds?

Apostasy by way of deeds occurs if a Muslim does one of the following:

- 1- Prostration to other than God, such as: to an idol, or to a grave.
- 2- Sacrificial slaughtering for jinn in hopes of their support or due to fear of them, or sacrificial slaughtering for the dead in order to draw near to them.
- 3- Intentionally putting the Qur'an in a place of filth (to revile it)
- 4- Practicing magic, learning it and teaching it

Q43: What are some examples of apostasy by way of belief?

Apostasy by way of belief occurs if a Muslim does one of the following:

- 1- Believing that God has a partner in divinity
- 2- Believing that there is no resurrection after death, or that there is no Heaven or Hell
- 3- Proclaiming the legality of something which God has

prohibited such as holding that adultery, fornication, or intoxicants are legal; or by holding that overruling the divine rules which God has sent down is permissible and correct action.

4- Rejecting the pillars, or the requisite tenants of the religion such as: rejection of the *Salah* (mandatory prayers), *Zakah* (annual Islamic poor-tax for supporting the poor and needy), *Sawm* (fasting) Ramadan, and *Al-Hajj* (the pilgrimage to Makkah).

Q44: What are some examples of apostasy by way of doubt?

Apostasy by way of doubt occurs if a Muslim does one of the following:

- 1- Doubting the resurrection after death, or the existence of Heaven and Hell.
- 2- Doubting the religion of Islam or its correctness for this era.
- 3- Doubting the message of the Prophet (peace and special blessings be upon him), or his truthfulness
- 4- Doubting the beneficent Qur'an, that it is the Word of God, the Exalted

Q45: What are some examples of apostasy by way of abandonment (of a necessary aspect of Islam)?

Apostasy by way of abandonment occurs if a Muslim intentionally forsakes *Salah* (the obligatory prayers); this is evident in the statement of the Prophet (peace and special blessings be upon him): *“Indeed, that which is between a man (or a woman) and becoming a polytheist, or disbeliever is abandoning Salah (obligatory prayers).”*¹

¹ Collected by Muslim (82)

Chapter Seven: *Shirk*

Q46: What is the meaning of shirk (polytheism), and what are its different categories ⁽¹⁾?

Shirk is associating partners with Allah, the Exalted and is of two kinds:

1. Major Shirk
2. Minor Shirk

Q47: What is *major shirk* (polytheism)?

Major Shirk is the act of directing any kind of worship to other than Allah.

Q48: What are some examples of *major shirk*?

Some examples of major shirk are as follows:

1. To invoke or supplicate to other than Allah, or give sacrificial offerings or religious vows in the name of other than Allah: such as doing so for particular graves, or for the jinn and the devils.
2. Another example is in hoping for assistance from other than Allah for a matter with which none other than Allah, the Creator, can assist, such as seeking to be cured of sickness, or relieved of misfortune or particular difficulties.

⁽¹⁾TN: *Shirk* is an Islamic term used for polytheism and its various forms. We will use the two terms “Shirk” and “Polytheism” interchangeably in this chapter.

Q49: What are the ill effects of *major shirk*?

Major shirk is the greatest sin and its evils are many:

1. Major shirk expels one out of Islam.
2. Major shirk invalidates all good deeds.
3. God does not forgive anyone who dies practicing major shirk (polytheism).
4. Major shirk prevents one from entrance into Paradise and will result in one abiding forever in the Hell fire, if he/she dies practicing this major form of polytheism.

Q50: What are the causes by which people fall into *major shirk*?

The causes of the major polytheism are many, the primary cause among them are as follows:

1. Exaggerated admiration of righteous people
2. Ignorance of Islamic monotheism and the meaning of the testimony that “there is no god worthy of worship except Allah”
3. Following vain desires
4. Blind following of others

Q51: What is *Minor Shirk* (polytheism)?

Minor Shirk is all acts which Allah or His Messenger has forbidden which lead to Major Shirk (polytheism); hence, often resulting in one’s falling into the major forms of polytheism. They are among the acts which have been labeled “shirk (polytheism)” in the Quran and in the Prophetic Sunnah.

Q52: What are some of the different types of *Minor Shirk* (polytheism)?

Minor Shirk is of two kinds:

The first kind: Overt Polytheism, which is divided into two parts:

1. Shirk (or polytheism) in speech: such as swearing in the name of something other than Allah, like saying: “The affair is as Allah and you have willed.”
2. Shirk (or polytheism) by actions: such as wearing a particular ring or thread with the belief that it will remove calamity or cause one’s troubles to go away.

The second kind: Obscure Polytheism, which is the act of showing off in one’s worship, intending to impress people.

Q53: What is the difference between major and minor shirk (polytheism)?

The differences between major and minor polytheism are as follows:

- 1- Major shirk expels one from Islam while minor shirk does not; however, it decreases *Tauheed* (or is a deficiency in one’s adherence to the principles of *Tauheed*.)
- 2- Major shirk contradicts the very essence of *Tauheed* while minor shirk just prevents one from implementing *Tauheed* in the desired manner.
- 3- Major shirk renders all deeds fruitless while minor shirk does not; however, *Ar-Riya’* (showing off) does render the related actions fruitless but not all of a person’s actions.
- 4- Major shirk lands its practitioner in Hell forever, while minor shirk does not cause anyone to dwell in Hell forever, if they are sentenced to a period there.

Chapter Eight: *Hypocrisy*

Q54: What is the meaning of hypocrisy and what are its different types?

Hypocrisy is showing good outwardly while hiding evil internally and it is of two types:

- 1- Hypocrisy in belief, which is also called *major hypocrisy*.
- 2- Hypocrisy in deeds, which is also called *minor hypocrisy*.

Q55: What does “hypocrisy in belief” refer to?

Hypocrisy in belief: Professing Islam outwardly while actually disbelieving internally.

Q56: What are the different types of “hypocrisy in belief”?

Hypocrisy in belief is of six types:

- 1- Disbelief in the Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him)
- 2- Disbelief in anything the Messenger has taught and called to
- 3- Hatred for the Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him)
- 4- Hatred for anything the Messenger has taught and called to (peace and special blessings be upon him)
- 5- Pleasure with any decrease in the strength and/or prevalence of the religion of the Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him)
- 6- Hatred for any dominance which the religion of the

Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him) may enjoy

Q57: What is “hypocrisy in deeds”?

Hypocrisy in deeds: to commit an action of hypocrisy although faith remains in the heart such as: lying, deceit, laziness regarding praying in congregation.

Q58: What are the differences between hypocrisy in belief and hypocrisy in deeds?

The differences between hypocrisy in belief and hypocrisy in deeds are as follows:

- 1- Hypocrisy in belief expels an individual from Islam while hypocrisy in deeds does not.
- 2- Hypocrisy in belief is for one’s internal convictions and external actions to completely contradict each other -- in that he conceals disbelief yet outwardly practices particular aspects of Islam.
Hypocrisy in deeds, on the other hand, is for there to be a level of contradiction between one’s internal beliefs and external actions; however, it is strictly with regards to particular hypocritical actions, not denoting disbelief.
- 3- Hypocrisy in belief does not occur with a believer, whereas hypocrisy in deeds can occur with believers.

Chapter Nine: Valid Worship and Impermissible Innovation

Q59: Why did Allah, the Exalted, create us? And what is the proof?

Allah, the Exalted, created us to worship Him alone without associating any partner with Him. The proof is His saying:

((وما خلقت الجن والإنس إلا ليعبدون)) [الذاريات: ٥٦].

“And I have not created the jinn or men except that they worship Me (Alone).”

[The Qur’an, Chapter At-Thariyat: 56]

Q60 – What is the meaning of worship?

Al-Ibadah (worship) is a comprehensive term which encompasses all statements and actions that Allah is pleased with, whether they be apparent or hidden.

Q61 – What are the conditions for the acceptance of worship?

Worship is accepted when two conditions are met:

1. Sincerity to Allah, the Exalted, must be pure.
2. Worship must be in accordance with the example and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Q62 – What is the meaning of sincerity in worship to Allah, the Exalted?

Sincerity means: To ensure that one's acts of worship for Allah are free from all forms of shirk (polytheism) and free from the intentions of impressing people.

Q63 – What is the proof that sincerity in the worship of Allah, the Exalted, is an obligation?

The proof that sincerity in the worship of Allah is an obligation is found in the saying of Allah, the Exalted:

((وما أُمرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ)) [البينة: ٥].

“And they were only commanded to worship Allah (Alone), being sincere to Him in obedience and upright”.

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Bayyinah: 5]

Q64 – What is the meaning of following the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him?

Following the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is to take the Prophet as the ultimate role model in the worship of Allah, the Exalted, ensuring that all worship is in accordance to the Sunnah, void of innovation.

Q 65 - What is the proof that following the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is an obligation?

The proof that following the Prophet is an obligation is found in the saying of Allah, the Exalted:

((قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ))

ذَنوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)) [آل عمران: ٣١].

“Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you for your sins, for Allah is forgiving, Merciful” [The Qur’an, Chapter Aali Imran: 31]

Q66 – What is the meaning of innovation in the religion?

Religious innovation is to worship Allah in a way which is not in accordance with the way of the Prophet – may the special blessings of God and peace be upon him, nor with the way of the rightly-guided caliphs. It is also said: “It is every act of worship, initiated by people, which has no evidence in the Quran or the Sunnah, nor in any consensus of the Prophet’s companions.

Q67 – What is the ruling concerning religious innovation? What is the proof for this?

Religious innovation is forbidden and is absolute deviance. The proof is in the saying of the Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): *“Whoever does an act of worship which is not from our religion will have that act rejected” [Narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim]*

As well as in the saying of the Prophet: *“Every innovation is a deviation” [Narrated by Muslim]*

Q68 – What are the different kinds of religious innovations?

Religious innovation is of two kinds:

The First Kind:

Innovation in statements related to the creed: such as the

deviated sayings of the Jahmiyah, the Mu'tzalia, the Khawarij, Rawafidh, and all other misguided sects.

The Second Type:

Innovation in formal acts of worship: such as worshiping Allah in a way not legislated by the religion. This of three types:

1. The first type occurs in the very origin of the act of worship such as: circumambulating human graves as a ritual, or ritualistic birthday celebrations for particular prophets, saints, etc.
2. The second type is specific to the incorrect ways particular acts of worship are performed, such as the innovated practice of congregational prayer supplications.
3. The third type is done by specifying a time for a particular act of worship which is not specified by Islamic law: such as the designation of fasting on the fifteenth of the month of Sha'ban, or performing unlegislated prayers during the nights of Sha'ban.

Q69 – What are some examples of religious innovation?

Religious innovations are many. A few important examples:

1. Celebration of the Prophet's birthday
2. Celebration of the night of Isra and Mi'raj.
3. Construction of tombstones and structures for graves and designating them as places of prayer.

Q70 – What are the causes of innovations?

The causes of innovation:

1. Ignorance of the laws of Islam
2. Following one's vain or evil desires
3. Blindly following others
4. Imitating disbelievers

Chapter Ten: Al-Wudoo and Al-Gusl

Q71: What is the meaning of *wudoo* (ablution)?

Al-wudoo: It is the washing and wiping of specific body parts (before specified acts of worship). It is necessary for a Muslim to be in a state of ritual purity (having performed wudoo without nullifying it) in order to perform formal prayer; formal prayer is not considered valid without it.

Q72: What are the prerequisites for *wudoo*?

The prerequisites for wudoo are ten:

- 1- Islam (meaning: one must be Muslim)
- 2- A sound mind
- 3- *Tamyeez* (having reached the age at which one begins to distinguish concerning important affairs: usually around seven years old)
- 4- Intention to perform wudoo
- 5- Keeping a continuous intention to complete wudoo, throughout its steps until fully completed.
- 6- Discontinuation of the act which makes wudoo necessary (such as: urination, sleep, etc.)
- 7- Performing *Istinja* (cleaning the private parts with water) or *Istijmar* (cleaning the private parts with a rock, tissue paper, or the likes) when one urinates or defecates, before performing wudoo.
- 8- Clean water available to use for the purpose of ablution
- 9- Removal of anything which prevents water from reaching the skin
- 10- Commencement of the prayer time, for those who have abnormally continuous urinal or bowel release.

Q73: What are the necessary steps to perform *wudoo*?

The necessary steps for *wudoo*:

1. Washing one's face, and this includes washing inside of one's mouth and nose.
2. Washing one's hands and arms up to the elbows.
3. Wiping one's entire head including the ears.
4. Washing one's feet including the ankles.
5. Correct order, which means: doing the prescribed action for each body part, which is washed or wiped in *wudoo*, in order. So, the face is washed first. Then, the hands. Then, the head is wiped. After which, one washes his feet. This is all according to that which God, the Exalted, has ordered in His *Book*.
6. Performing the steps of *wudoo* with no interruptions. This means: the steps of *wudoo* must be done in a sequential manner with no interruption, to the best of one's ability.

Q74: What nullifies *wudoo*?

The nullifiers of *wudoo* are four:

- 1- Excretions from one of the two private areas, in the form of urine, sperm, defecation or gas.
- 2- Loss of sanity, or to fall unconscious, or to sleep -- excluding light sleeping.
- 3- Eating camel meat
- 4- Touching one's bear private part.

Q75: Where in Islamic law is *wudoo* mandated for prayer once one of the acts which nullifies it occurs?

Wudoo is made mandatory by Allah in his statement in the Quran:

((يا أيها الذين ءامنوا إذا قمتم إلى الصلاة فاغسلوا وجوهكم وأيديكم إلى المرافق وامسحوا برؤوسكم وأرجلكم إلى الكعبين)) [المائدة: ٦].

“Oh believers, before you stand for prayer, wash your faces and your hands and arms to your elbows; wipe your heads, and wash your feet to your ankles.”

[The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Maidah: 6]

Q76: What is the meaning of gusl?

Al-gusl: It is to rinse and/or wash the entire body with water in a specific manner.

Q77: What are the causes which necessitate that one must perform gusl?

Gusl becomes necessary due to three causes:

1. The excretion of sperm as a result of sexual excitement or pleasure.
2. Sexual intercourse, even if one does not ejaculate or excrete any sexual fluids.
3. The excretion of menstrual blood and/or fluids as well as the excretion of postpartum blood.

Q78: Where in Islamic law is “gusl” mandated due to the above-mentioned causes?

Gusl is mandated in the statement of Allah, the Exalted:

((وإن كنتم جنباً فأتھروا)) [المائدة: ٦].

“And if you are *Junub* (meaning: having had sex or having had any of the excretions which mandate gusl), then clean and purify yourselves (by performing gusl).

[The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Maidah: 6]

Q79: What are the comprehensive benefits of *wudoo* and *gusl*?

The comprehensive benefits of *wudoo* and *gusl* are abundant:

- 1- Manifesting that Islam is a magnificent religion which calls to physical and moral cleanliness
- 2- Special expiation of sins which have been committed using the particular body parts that are washed in *wudoo*⁽¹⁾
- 3- Preserving physical health, the body's wellness and its overall energy
- 4- Special preparation to be in the best of states when calling on God in prayer.

⁽¹⁾They are: the hands, entire face, forearms, head, ears and feet.

Chapter Eleven: Al-Salah

Q80: What is the meaning of the term *salah*?

The *salah* is a specific act of worship in which there are specific utterances and actions performed, beginning with *takbeer*⁽¹⁾ and ending with *tasleem*⁽²⁾.

Q81: What are the obligatory prayers which must be performed by every male and female Muslim?

The obligatory prayers are five prayers per day:

- 1- Al-Fajr (two units)
- 2- Al-Thuhr (four units)
- 3- Al-Asr (four units)
- 4- Al-Magrib (three units)
- 5- Al-Isha (four units)

Q82: Where in Islamic law are the five prayers mandated?

The five daily prayers are mandated in the statement of Allah, the Exalted:

((حافظوا على الصلوات والصلاة الوسطى وقوموا لله قانتين)) [البقرة: ٢٣٨].

“Adhere diligently to your prayers and give special

⁽¹⁾TN: The act of saying “Allahu akbar” (God is Greatest) while raising the hands up near the shoulders (palms facing away from the body)

⁽²⁾TN: The act of calmly turning the head to the right then left while uttering “Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatulllah” (may the peace and mercy of God be upon you) to each side.

attention to the middle prayer, and stand steadfast in obedience to Allah.”

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 238]

Q83: What is the Islamic ruling regarding the Muslim who abandons “salah” (obligatory prayers)?

Abandonment of obligatory prayers is such a major act of disbelief that it invalidates one's practice of Islam.

The evidence for this is in the statement of the Prophet Muhammad, “Indeed, abandoning formal prayer is one of the primary affairs which lands one into “shirk” (polytheism) and “kufr” (disbelief).

Q84: What are the conditions which must be met before one can perform salah?

The conditions which must be met for salah are nine:

1. Islam (meaning: one must be Muslim)
2. Sound mind
3. “Tamyeez” (to reach around 7 years of age)
4. Being in a state of “wudoo” (having performed ritual ablution)
5. Removing impurities and filth from the body and the area of prayer.
6. Covering the “Aura” (designated area of the body considered particularly private)
7. Performing prayers in their valid time of day/night.
8. Facing the direction of the “Kabah” in Makkah.
9. Having the intention in one's heart to perform the particular prayer.

Q85: The *Arkan* (primary, mandatory aspects) of prayer are 14:

1. Standing for prayer, when one is able to stand.
2. The first “Takbeer” (two raise the hands in front of the shoulders and say “Allahu Akbar”.)
3. Reading the “Fatihah”.
4. Doing “Rukoo’ (bowing at the specified times)
5. Returning to an upright stand after Rukoo’
6. Prostrating with the seven specified body parts touching the ground.
7. The sitting up from Rukoo’.
8. The brief sitting between prostrations.
9. Remaining tranquil throughout all “Arkan” of prayer.
10. Performing these acts in order.
11. The final “Tashahud” (supplication said at the end prayer)
12. Sitting during the final “Tashahud”.
13. Utterance of the special “salah” for the Prophet Muhammad (special supplication).
14. The two “Tasleems” (utterance of “assalaamu alaikum wa rahmatullah” or one of its specified variations at the end of prayer)

Q86: What is the level of importance of the Qur’anic chapter, *Al-Fatihah*?

The chapter “Al-Fatihah” is the greatest chapter of the Quran and it must be learned, because formal prayers are not valid without one’s reciting this chapter. There is consensus among Muslim scholars that it has seven verses, and the correct position concerning the utterance of the “basmallah” (which is saying “bismillah” (in the name of God) is that it is not considered a part of the chapter itself but separate. The

verses of Al-Fatihah are the profound words of God, the Exalted:

((الحمد لله رب العالمين (1) الرحمن الرحيم (2) مالك يوم الدين (3) إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين (4) اهدنا الصراط المستقيم (5) صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم (6) غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين (7) [الفاتحة: ١-٧].

“All praise is due to God, the Lord of all worlds, the Most-Gracious, The Most-Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement; You alone we worship, and from You alone we seek help; guide us on the straight path, the path of those whom you have given special blessings and not the path of those who have incurred Your anger, nor those who are astray.” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Fatihah: 1-7]

Q87: What are the *wajibat* (second-level mandatory aspects of prayer)?

The *wajibat* of prayer are eight:

1. All *takbeerat* other than the first one, which is *Takbeeratul-Ihram*.
2. While in *rukoo'* (bowing position), saying “SubhanaRabee al-Atheem” (My Lord, The Most Great, is highly Exalted above all imperfections)
3. Saying “Sami’ Allahu li man hamidah” (Allah hears the one who calls on Him); this must be said by the leader of prayer as well as those being led in prayer.
4. Saying “Rabanawalak al-hamd” (Our Lord, all praise is for you.); everyone must say this.
5. While in prostration, saying “Subhana Rabee al-A’laa” (My Lord, The Most-High, is highly Exalted above all imperfections).

6. Between prostrations, saying “Rabigfir lee” (My Lord, please forgive me.)
7. The first “Tashahud” (supplication said at the end prayer)
8. Sitting during the final “Tashahud”.

Q88: What is the first *tashahud*?

The first *tashahud* is for the person praying to say that which means:

“All of the greatest praises, prayers -- and all good things-- are for God. Peace be upon you – oh Messenger of God – as well as the Mercy of God and His blessings. May we be blessed with peace and all of God’s upright slaves; I testify that there is no god worthy of worship other than the One True God, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.”

Q89: When should the first *tashahud* be uttered?

The first *tashahud* must be uttered when the person praying raises up from the second prostration in the second part of Al-Thuhr, Al-Asr, Al-Magrib and Al-Isha prayers.

Q90: What is the final *tashahud*?

The final *tashahud* is for the one praying to say:

“All of the greatest praises, prayers -- and all good things are for God. Peace be upon you – oh Messenger of God – as well as the Mercy of God and His blessings. May we be blessed with peace and all of God’s upright slaves; I testify that there is no god worthy of worship other than the One True God, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger. Oh Allah, grant your special blessings to

Muhammad and to Muhammad's family as you granted them Abraham and Abraham's family; indeed you are Most-Praiseworthy and Glorious. Please shower your blessings upon Muhammad and upon Muhammad's family as you have showered blessings upon Ibrahim and upon his family; indeed you are Most-Praiseworthy and Glorious".

Q91: When must the *final tashahud* be said?

The *final tashahud* must be said when the one praying assumes the sitting position after the second prostration of the last part of all prayers.

Q92: What are the *sunan* (optional yet recommended aspects) of prayer?

The *sunan* of prayer are many, such as:

1. The special opening supplication.
2. Placing the right hand on the left hand while in the *qiyam* (standing) position.
3. Raising the hands up in front of the shoulders or in front of the ears: when saying the *first takbeerah*⁽¹⁾, upon the commencement of bowing to *rukoo*⁽²⁾, when raising from that bowing position, and when standing up after the *first tashahud*.
4. Utterance of *tasbeeh* (saying *subhaanallah*) which exceeds one time while in either the bowing position or prostration.
5. Utterance for *magfirah* (such as *Allahumma igfir lee*⁽³⁾) which exceeds one time in the supplication which is said

⁽¹⁾ TN: *FirstTakbeerah*: saying *Allahuakbar* (which means God is the Greatest) as the opening for prayer.

⁽²⁾ TN: *Rukoo*: the bowing position

⁽³⁾ TN: *Allahumma igfir lee*: means "Oh Allah, forgive me!"

between two prostrations.

6. Aligning one's head even with the back while in the bowing position.

7. While in prostration, keeping one's forearms away from the sides of the body, and keeping one's stomach from resting on the thighs.

8. Keeping the arms raised off of the floor during prostration.

9. Sitting on the back of the left shin and foot while propping the right shin and foot up (using the right foot and toes) in the *first tashahud*, as well as between each pair of prostrations, and for the *final tashahud* for prayers of more than two parts. This special way of sitting is called "*al-iftirash*".

10. *At-tawarruk* in the *final tashahud* -- in prayers of three or four parts --and it is as follows: sitting on the left most side of the buttocks and placing the left shin and foot underneath the right leg, while propping the right shin and foot up (using the right foot and toes).

11. Supplicating at the end of the *final tashahud*.

12. Reciting Qur'anic verses aloud in the following prayers: Al-Fajr, Al-Juma'ah, Al-Eid, Al-Istisqa'⁽¹⁾, A-Magrib and Al-Isha.

13. Reciting Qur'anic verses silently in the following prayers: Al-Thuhr, Al-Asr, in the third part of Al-Magrib, and in the last two parts of Al-Isha.

14. All Qur'anic verses which are read above and beyond the mandatory recitation of Al-Fatihah.

⁽¹⁾ TN: *Al-Istisqa'*: a special congregational prayer made, when there is an increased need for rain, to ask God to send down rain.

Q93: What is the difference between the *arkan*, the *wajibat* and the *sunan* of formal prayer?

As for the *ruk'n* (singular of "arkan": mandatory aspects): one's prayer is rendered invalid whether it is omitted intentionally or mistakenly.

Regarding the *wajib* (second-level mandatory aspects) of prayer: one's prayer is also rendered invalid if they are omitted intentionally; however, if they are omitted mistakenly, one can validate his prayer by performing two prostrations at the end of prayer called "sajdataa as-sahu".

As for the *sunan* (optional aspects) of prayer: they are highly recommended, yet there is no invalidation of prayer if one omits these aspects.

Q94: What are the actions and conditions which nullify prayer?

- 1- Speaking intentionally unless out of ignorance or forgetfulness
- 2- Laughing
- 3- Eating and Drinking
- 4- Uncovering the *aurah* (specified private areas of the body)
- 5- Deviating too far off from facing the direction of the *qiblah* (the direction of the sacred house in Makkah, *the ka'bah*)
- 6- Successive and excessive vain movement in prayer
- 7- Breaking one's state of *taharah* (purity)
- 8- Omitting any one of the pillars of prayer such as: remaining tranquil, prostration or the seven body parts which must touch the ground during prostration.

Moreover, there are various other actions which are impressible during prayer: such as raising one's gaze to the sky, preceding the leader of prayer to movements and positions of prayer, bearing a foul smell which harms the people praying, and like reciting Qur'an internally, in the heart, during prayer without actually uttering the words with one's tongue.

Q95: What are the comprehensive benefits of *Salah*?

- 1- *Salah* brings tranquility to the heart opening one's chest (to truth and goodness); it is one to one communication with God, The All-Mighty and Majestic.
- 2- *Salah* expiates sins and evil deeds.
- 3- *Salah* protects a Muslim from evil and calamities; with prayer, a Muslim is under the special care and protection of God.
- 4- *Salah* prevents a Muslim from doing wretched and despicable actions.
- 5- *Salah* is the means through which help is sought in times of need.

Chapter Twelve: Al-Zakah

Q96: What is the meaning of Zakah?

Az-Zakah is a compulsory law and legal right for a specified group of people to particular financial assistance at specified times.

Q97: Where in Islamic law is Zakah mandated?

Zakah is made mandatory in the statement of Allah, the Exalted:

((وأقيموا الصلاة واتوا الزكاة)) [البقرة: ٤٣].

“Adhere diligently to prayer and pay *Zakah*...”
[The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 43]

Q98: What are the forms of wealth for which *Zakah* is mandatory?

The forms of taxable wealth for which *Zakah* is mandatory are five:

- 1- Specified grazing beasts including: camels, cows, and sheep
- 2- That which grows on land including: grain and fruit
- 3- The two monetary agents: gold and silver. In addition, this category includes the various paper currencies which has taken the place of gold and silver as monetary agents
- 4- Items and commodities which are on the market for sale
- 5- Specified metals and ore

Q99: The conditions under which Zakah is mandatory upon an individual is when the following four descriptions apply to him/her:

1. Islam (meaning: Zakah is only mandatory upon Muslims)
2. Freedom (meaning: Zakah is not required from slaves)
3. Well-established ownership of the “nisab” (a specified minimum amount of the taxable income or item, without which Zakah is not legally due from an individual).
4. The taxable wealth or item must have been fully owned by the individual for a complete year.¹

Q100: Who are the rightful recipients of Zakah?

The Rightful Recipients of Zakah

The people who have a right to Zakah are of eight categories, which Allah, the Exalted, specified in His statement:

((إنما الصدقات للفقراء والمساكين والعاملين عليها والمؤلفة قلوبهم وفي الرقاب والغارمين وفي سبيل الله وابن السبيل فريضة من الله والله عليم حكيم)) [التوبة: ٦٠].

“The mandatory charity (Zakah) is only due to those in extreme poverty (al-fuqaraa) and the poor (al-masakeen), as well as those who work in the field of distributing the

¹ And this condition is specific to grazing animals, the two monetary agents: gold and silver, and items on the market for sale; as for that which the earth bears of grain and fruit, *zakah* is mandatory for them at the time they are harvest. As for metals and ore, *zakah* is mandatory for them when they are found. Concerning the produce of grazing animals and the profits of items on the market, the related *zakah* is due according to the *zakah* period for the relative animal or item from which the produce or profit is generated.

Zakah, and those (Muslim or non-Muslim) individuals who can be swayed in favor of some benefit to Islam and the Muslims; for slaves with the opportunity to be freed, and for those in great debt or in dire need of cash for specified reasons; for specified soldiers who are in need, and for travelers truly in need. This is a mandate from Allah, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”
[The Qur’an, Chapter At-Taubah: 60]

Q101: What are the comprehensive benefits of *Zakah*?

The comprehensive benefits of *Zakah* are many:

- 1- Implementing the core values of social support and cooperation, while cultivating love and care between the rich and the poor Muslims.
- 2- Purification of the soul, cleansing it, and ridding it of evil characteristics such as greed and stinginess.
- 3- Earning increased blessings, special rewards and favors of God, the Exalted.

Chapter Thirteen: Al-Sawm

Q102: What is the meaning of the term *Sawm*?

Sawm: It is refraining from eating, drinking, and all other acts which nullify one's fast; this must be done with the proper intention, and from the time of official time of "fajr" until the time of sunset.

Q103: What is the proof in Islamic law that mandates fasting in Ramadan?

The proof in Islamic law which mandates fasting in Ramadan is the statement of Allah, the Exalted:

((يا أيها الذين آمنوا كتب عليكم الصيام كما كتب على الذين من قبلكم لعلكم تتقون)) [البقرة: ١٨٣].

"Oh believers, fasting has been prescribed for you as it has been prescribed for those before you, that you might become truly pious".

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 183]

Q104: What are the personal conditions for which fasting becomes incumbent upon an individual?

The personal conditions for which fasting becomes incumbent upon an individual are six:

1. Islam (meaning: one must be Muslim)
2. Puberty
3. Sound mind
4. Physical ability to fast

5. Being in your place of permanent residence (not while traveling)
6. Specific to women: not being on the menstrual cycle or undergoing postpartum bleeding

Q105: What are the valid reasons for which one can break his/her fast in Ramadan?

The valid reasons for which one can break his/her fast in Ramadan are four:

1. Illness or old age which causes great difficulty in fasting
2. Travel
3. The menstrual cycle and the postpartum bleeding period
4. Pregnancy, when there is extreme difficulty for the woman or on the baby in her womb.
5. Breastfeeding, when there is extreme difficulty for the breastfeeding woman or her suckling child.

Q106: What are the acts which break one's fast?

The acts which break one's fast are seven:

1. Sexual intercourse
2. Excretion of sperm
3. Eating and drinking
4. Processes or medical procedures which serve the ultimate purpose of eating and drinking: such as injections that offer nutritional benefits
5. Excretion of blood in the process of "hijama" (a traditional practice by which blood is extracted from a person for health purposes)
6. Vomiting intentionally, by extracting food and/or drink which has entered the stomach
7. Excretion of menstrual or postpartum blood

Q107: What are the circumstances in which the actions above break one's fast?

The actions which break one's fast do not do so except under three circumstances:

- 1- When the fasting person knows the religious ruling concerning the particular nullifier and is aware of the time.
- 2- When the fasting person is cognizant of the fact that he is fasting
- 3- When the fasting person does the action which nullifies his fast by choice

Q108: What are the comprehensive benefits of *Sawm*?

The comprehensive benefits of *Sawm* are many:

- 1- Training people to develop the most valuable of characteristics, such as patience and forbearance.
- 2- Reminding people of the great blessings of God upon his slaves, such as food and drink
- 3- Reminding people of the dire need of those in poverty, so that they might do something to help comfort them and strive to do well by them.
- 4- Preserving the overall good health and wellness of the body.

Chapter Fourteen: Al-Hajj

Q109: What is the meaning of the term “*Hajj*”?

Hajj: It is traveling to Makkah for the purpose of performing specific acts, at a specified time.

Q110: The proof in Islamic law which mandates the performance of *Hajj* is the statement of Allah, the Exalted:

((وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا)) [آل عمران: 97].
“And it is the right of Allah, that people perform *Hajj* to the House (Al-Kabah in Makkah), those who have the ability. [The Qur’an, Chapter Aali Imran: 97]

Q111: What are the personal conditions for which Hajj becomes incumbent upon an individual?

The conditions are five:

1. Islam (meaning: one must be Muslim)
2. Sound mind
3. Puberty
4. Freedom (slaves are not required to do Hajj)
5. Capability (physical, financial, circumstantial)

Q112: What are the valid forms of Hajj?

They are three:

1. *At-Tamattu'*: which is assuming “ihram” (the proper

clothing and observance of Hajj rules) for Umrah¹ in the months of Hajj performance. Then, officially coming out of the state of *ihram*. Then, assuming the state of *ihram* (a second time) for Hajj on the *Day of Tarwiyah* (the 8th day of the month of Hajj).

2. *Al-Qiran*: which is assuming the state of *ihram* (the proper clothing and observance of Hajj rules) for Umrah and Hajj together, at the same time.

3. *Al-Ifrad*: which is assuming the state of *ihram* (the proper clothing and observance of Hajj rules) for Hajj alone.

The best of these three forms of Hajj in order is: *Tamattu'*, then *Qiran*, then *Ifrad*. Note that the *qarin* (one performing *Qiran*) and the *mufrid* (one performing *Ifrad*) generally perform Hajj in the exact same way, except for the fact that the *qarin* must bring his animal for slaughter with him to Hajj, while the *mufrid* does not.

Q113: What are the mandatory rituals of Hajj?

They are four:

1. *Ihram* (the proper clothing and observance of Hajj rules)
2. Standing at *Arafah* (the mountain)
3. *Tawaf Al-Ifadah* (tawaf: the ritual of circumambulating the Kabah 7 times while supplicating)
4. *Sa'yu* (the ritual of walking and jogging while supplicating) between *Mount Safa* and *Mount Marwa*

¹ TN: Umrah is a much shorter, less-intensive, hajj-like visit to Makkah

Q114: What are *wajibat* (second-level mandatory rituals) of Hajj?

They are seven:

1. Assuming ihram (the proper clothing and observance of Hajj rules) from the “miqat” (designated place for ihram)
2. Remaining at Mount Arafah until night; this is specific to those who arrived there in the daytime.
3. Spending the night at Muzdalifah on the night before The Day of Nahr.
4. Spending the nights of “The Days of Tashreeq” at Mina.
5. Throwing the stones at the “Jamarat” in the proper order.
6. Shaving the head completely or trimming it.
7. Tawaf Al-Wida’ (tawaf: the ritual of circumambulating the Kabah 7 times); menstruating women and when in postpartum bleeding period do not perform this ritual.

Q115: What are the *Sunan* of Hajj?

The *Sunan* of Hajj are many:

- 1- Showering and putting on a pleasant fragrance before entering into the state of *Ihram*.
- 2- Performing *tawaful-qudoom* (a voluntary circumambulation of the *ka’bah* done upon arrival to Makkah) for the *mufrid* and the *qarin*⁽¹⁾
- 3- Lightly jogging in the first three rounds around the *ka’bah* for *tawaful-qudoom*
- 4- *Al-idthiba*⁽²⁾ in *tawaful-qudoom*
- 5- Praying a voluntary, two-part prayer after performing

⁽¹⁾ TN: Mufrid: the person performing Hajj Al-Ifrad (see question: 112, point 3)

Qarin: the person performing Hajj Al-Qiran (see question: 112, point 2)

⁽²⁾ TN: Al-idthiba’: placing the edge of the upper garment of *Ihram* over the left shoulder and passing under the right armpit, leaving the right shoulder bare.

tawaf (ritual circumambulation of the *ka'bah*)

6- Spending the night in *Mina* on the night of *Arafah*

7- Chanting the *talbiyah* from the time of wearing the *Ihram* until the time of throwing stones at *jamratul-a'qabah*

8- Praying Al-Thuhr and Al-Asr prayers in *Arafah* during the legislated period of time for Al-Thuhr prayer, if one reaches *Arafah* in time, as well as combining between Al-Magrib and Al-Isha upon arriving at Muzdalifah as long as the time period for Al-Isha has not passed.

Q116: What differentiates between the *arkan* of Hajj, its *wajibaat* and its *sunan*?

Hajj is not acceptable without the *arkan* of *Hajj*; as for the *wajibat*, if one of them is missed, the person who missed it must sacrifice an animal as atonement for the omission; regarding the *sunan*, they are highly recommended, yet there is nothing binding upon one who does not do them.

Q117: What are the *mahthoorat* (prohibited actions) while one is in *ihram*⁽¹⁾ for Hajj and Umrah?

The *Mahthoorat*⁽²⁾ of *Ihram*: They are the actions which are prohibited for anyone who is in a state of *ihram* for Hajj or Umrah. They are of three categories:

The First Category

Those actions which are prohibited for men and women, which are seven prohibitions:

⁽¹⁾ TN: *Ihram*: the state of being official in observance of Hajj/Umrah rules and regulations, outwardly manifested by wearing the special clothing for Hajj

⁽²⁾ TN: *Mahthoorat*: Literally means dangerous affairs; prohibited actions

1. Removing hair from the head or the body by shaving it or otherwise
2. Clipping one's nails
3. Using any form of perfume, cologne or fragrance
4. Marriage
5. Touching anyone lustfully
6. Sexual intercourse
7. Hunting animals to kill them

The Second Category

Those actions which are prohibited for men only. They are two prohibitions:

1. Covering one's head (with a hat, scarf, etc.)
2. Wearing clothes which are sewn and tailored specific for wearing

The Third Category

Those actions which are prohibited for women only. They are two prohibitions:

1. Wearing the *niqab* or *burqa* (specially-tailored face covers)
2. Wearing gloves

Q118: What are some of the comprehensive benefits of Hajj?

Hajj's comprehensive benefits are numerous:

1. The gathering of Muslims from all corners of the world, and the care and love displayed amongst them -- their getting to know one another.
2. The clear display of unity among Muslims, emphasizing that they are truly one nation; they gather in one place and time, all wearing the same kind of garments showing no

discrimination between the rich and the poor, nor between the Arab and non-Arab, nor the white and the black.

3. The striking reminder of what will happen in the Hereafter and how the slaves of God will stand before Him (for judgment) on the “The Day of Standing” (which is another name for the Day of Judgment).

Chapter Fifteen: A Comprehensive Section on the Creed of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*

Q119: Which sect amongst the various sects of Muslims is the one group whose adherents will be safe from the Hellfire⁽¹⁾?

The sect which will be safe from the Hellfire is: *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*.⁽²⁾

Q120: Who are “*Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*”?

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah are: those who cooperate in holding firmly to the way of the Prophet (may peace and special blessings be upon him) and implementing it inwardly as well as outwardly, in speech, action, and in belief.

It has also been said that “*Ahlus-Sunnah*” (The People who adhere to the Prophet’s Way) are: the people of the “straight path” who adhere to the true Islam with which Muhammad (may peace and special blessings be upon him) came; the way which “the salaf” (upright predecessors of old in Islamic history) followed and for this reason, this way is also called “Al-Salafiya” (meaning literally: the way of the upright predecessors of early Islamic history).

⁽¹⁾ TN: This applies to those who truly stick to its method of practicing Islam.

⁽²⁾ TN: Referred to in Arabic as *اهل السنة والجماعة* “*Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jama'ah*”: This title refers to Muslim people who ascribe to and commit to practicing Islam in accordance with its authentic sources, the Qur’an and the Sunnah of Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon him); those who do not take on deviant methodologies and/or beliefs as their way, practice and/or understanding of Islam.

Q121: For what purpose are they called *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*?

The reason they are called “*Ahlus-Sunnah*” is because they adhere to it (the *Sunnah*); as for *wal-Jama'ah*, it is because they cooperate in adhering to the Prophet’s way as a group.

Q122: Why has this group (and its way) been called “*Salafiyah*”?

The reason for which this group (and its way) was named *Salafiyah* is because its adherents follow the methodology of the upright predecessors (of early Islamic history), among the companions, and the upright students and followers of the companions.

Q123: What is the proof that *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*⁽¹⁾ are the “*Saved Sect*”?

The evidence which proves that *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* are the *Saved Sect* is the statement of the Prophet (may peace and special blessings of Allah be upon him): “Jews have split up into seventy-one sects; Christians have split up into seventy-two sects; and this nation (of Muslims) will split up into seventy-three sects, all of them will be in the Hellfire except one”; so, it was then asked, “Who are they oh Messenger of Allah?”; The Prophet (may peace and special blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “Those who are upon my way [which I am now living and teaching] and the way of

⁽¹⁾ TN: We are use the transliteration “*Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*” interchangeably with its English meaning “*The People who adhere to the teachings and tradition of Prophet Muhammad and with the Upright Group of Muslims*” for the purpose of familiarizing readers with the Arabic pronunciation as well as its actual meaning in English.

my Companions.” In another narration his response to the question was simply: “*Al-Jama’ah* (The Upright Group of Muslims)”.¹

Q124: What are the beliefs of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* regarding the correct understanding of God’s attributes: His being above His creation; and His ascending?

The beliefs of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning His attribute of being *high above His creation*, and His attribute of *ascending* is based on the consensus of the Companions of the Prophet as well as all of the Messengers of God (may special blessings and peace be upon them) which is that God -- highly Exalted above all that is wrongly attributed to Him and does not befit Him --is above the heavens and all of creation; He is above His Throne, having *ascended above* it in a manner which suits His Majesty and Greatness⁽²⁾; His creation is not like Him concerning His attributes (and the divine ways He does what He does) at all.

Q125: What is the evidence from the Beneficent Qur’an which proves the attribute of God referred to as “*Al-Ulue*” (which refers to His being high above all His creation)?

The proof of His being high above all of His creation is in

¹ Collected by Al-Tirmithi (2641), Abu Dawood (4596), and Ibn Majah (3993), and Al-Albani authenticated it in “Saheeh Ibn Majah” (2/364).

⁽²⁾ TN: It is here that we, as Muslims, must understand that we cannot fully understand exactly how Allah does what He does. How can we expect to understand exactly how He does all that He does when we don’t even understand exactly how a fly does exactly what it does, or even how something smaller or larger from amongst created things do all that they do? Allah is the Greatest of all and there is nothing like Him!

His, the Exalted's, statement:

((أأمنتكم من في السماء أن يخسف بكم الأرض فإذا هي تمور))
[المك: 16].

“Are you all safe from He Who is above the heavens, safe from Him splitting the earth from under you and causing it to shake and become unstable.”

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Mulk: 16]

There is also proof in the statement of God, the Exalted:

((سبح أسم ربك الأعلى)) [الأعلى: 1].

“Sanctify the Name of your Lord The Most-High”.

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-A'ala:1]

These are in addition to various other verses.

Q126: What is the evidence from the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad which proves the attribute of God referred to as “Al-Ulue”?

The proof from the Sunnah that God is above all of His creation is in the narration of the Prophet (may peace and special blessing be upon him) concerning the slave-girl, when the Prophet (may peace and special blessing be upon him) asked her saying: *“Where is Allah?” She said, “Above the heavens”. Then he asked her: “Who am I?” She said, “You are the Messenger of God”. He said: “Free her; for indeed she is a believer.”* [Collected by Muslim: 537]

Q127: What is the evidence which confirms *Al-Istiwa* (ascension) as a valid attribution to God?

The proof which confirms *Al-Istiwa* as a valid attribution to God is in the statement of God, the Exalted:

((الرحمن على العرش أستوى)) [طه: 5].

“The Most-Merciful, above His Throne He ascended”
[The Qur’an, Chapter Taha: 5]

Similarly, the following phrase is found in six different places in the Qur’an:

“Then, He ascended above His Throne”. [Chapter Al-A’araf: 54; Chapter Yunus: 3; Chapter Al-Ra’d: 2; Chapter Al-Furqan: 59; Chapter As-Sajdah: 4; Chapter Al-Hadeed: 4]

Q128: What is the meaning of *Al-Istiwa* (ascension)?

The meaning of *Al-Istiwa* is: highness; rising up; it refers to God’s ascending above the Throne, rising over it.

Therefore, the meaning of *Al-Istiwa* is known in Arabic. As for the description of how, that is unknown. As Imam Malik said (may God have mercy on him), “The meaning of *Al-Istiwa* (ascension) is well-known, while the description of how God ascended is unknown; furthermore, believing that He ascended is mandatory, while inquiring about it is *bid’ah*¹”, meaning inquiring about the description of how God ascended. This is actually a broad fundamental principle implemented with regards to all of God’s attributes: “Their meanings are known while the “how” is unknown.”²

¹ TN: Bid’ah is the act of introducing an affair into the religion which is not a part of it, and which is therefore rejected.

² TN: See footnote 1, pg. 68

Q129: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning the Beneficent Qur'an?

The position of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*, concerning the Qur'an, is that it is the actual Word of God, every single letter -- along with its meanings; it has been sent down as revelation and is not a created thing; it originated from God and will return to Him. God spoke its words – in actuality – and conveyed it to Gabriel who descended to reveal it to the heart of His Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him).

Q130: What is the proof that the Qur'an is the Word of God, the Exalted?

The proof is His statement:

((وإن أحد من المشركين استجارك فأجره حتى يسمع كلام الله))
[التوبة: 6].

“And if one of the polytheists seeks to be in your company in safety (for the purpose of learning about Islam), allow him to draw near in safety so that he can hear the Word of God.” [The Qur'an, Chapter At-Taubah: 6]

The meaning of “The Word of God” in the verse is: The Qur'an.

Q131: What proves that the Qur'an was sent down from God and is not a created thing?

The proof that it was sent down from God is His statement:

((تبارك الذي نزل الفرقان على عبده ليكون للعالمين نذيراً))
[الفرقان: 1].

“Highly Exalted is He Who has sent down *Al-Furqan*⁽¹⁾ (another name of the Quran) upon His slave (Muhammad)” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Furqan: 1]

The proof that it is not a created thing (but the Word of God) is His statement:

((ألا له الخلق والأمر تبارك الله رب العالمين)) [الأعراف: 54].
“Is it not that the creation belongs to Him, as well as all Authority.” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-A’araf: 54]

Here, God refers to His Authority in a manner which makes it very clear that it is not a part of His creation; the Qur’an is a part, and manifestation, of His Authority, as He, the Exalted, said:

((وكذلك أوحينا إليك روحاً من أمرنا)) [الشورى: 52].

“And as such, We have sent revelation to you which is from Our Authority” [The Qur’an, Chapter As-Shura: 52]

Furthermore, the Word of God is an Attribute amongst His Attributes, and His Attributes are not created.

Q132: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning the affair of seeing God?

The creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning the affair of seeing God is that the believers will actually see their Lord with their eyes on *The Day of Standing* (The Day of Judgment) and in Paradise.

⁽¹⁾ TN: Al-Furqan: literally means the criterion. The Qur’an is the Ultimate Criterion.

Q133: What is the proof that the believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter?

The proof that the believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter is His, the Exalted's, statement:

((وجوه يومئذٍ ناضرة (22) إلى ربها ناظرة(23)) [القيامة: 22-23].

“The faces of believers will be radiant on that Day, looking at their Lord” [The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Qiyamah: 22-23]

As well as His, the Exalted's, statement:

((للذين أحسنوا الحسنى وزيادة)) [يونس: 26].

“For those who ultimately please God by way of their good deeds, there will be *Al-Husna* (meaning the greatest reward: Paradise) and an additional, most extraordinary reward. [The Qur'an, Chapter Yunus: 26]

Concerning this, it was mentioned in an authentic hadeeth that *Al-Husna* is Paradise, and that the additional reward is seeing the Beneficent Face of God.

Q134: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* regarding faith?

Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah hold with firm belief that *faith* comprises of speech of the tongue, belief of the heart, and actions of the limbs⁽¹⁾; it increases with obedience to God and decreases with disobedience to Him.

⁽¹⁾ TN: This refers to physical actions.

Q135: What is the evidence which proves that people's speech as well as their actions are aspects of their faith?

The proof that people's speech as well as their actions are aspects of their faith is in the Prophet's statement: *"Faith comprises of over seventy categories, the greatest of which is one's professing that "There is none worthy of worship except Allah (The One True God); and the least of which is one's removing harmful things from the path of others."*⁽¹⁾ So, herein, he spoke of both speech and actions as intricate aspects of faith.

Q136: What is the proof that faith increases and decreases?

The proof that faith increases and decreases is the statement of God, the Exalted:

((ويزداد الذين امنوا ايماناً)) [المذثر: 31].

"And those who believe increase in faith"

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Muddathir: 31]

Accordingly, proof that faith increases also proves the possibility of its decreasing.

Q137: What is the creed of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah concerning adherence to the jama'ah (upright group of Muslims)?

Ahlu-s-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah believe in the necessity of adhering to the *jama'ah* (upright group of Muslims) and their

⁽¹⁾ Collected by Al-Bukhari: 9; and Muslim: 35; and this particular wording is that of Muslim.

imam (leader), never abandoning them; the proof for this is His, the Exalted's, statement:

((واعتصموا بحبل الله جميعاً ولا تفرقوا)) [آل عمران: 103].

“Hold on firmly – together -- to the rope of Allah, and don't split up.” [The Qur'an, Chapter Aali Imran: 103]

Q138: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning compliance with rulers and those in charge, and what is the evidence which proves it?

Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah hold the firm belief that compliance with those in authority over the Muslims in all that is generally known to be good is an obligation, even if they (the leaders) are open sinners. The proof of this is in the statement of the Prophet (may peace and special blessings be upon him), *“Listening to and compliance with (those in authority over the Muslims) is an obligation upon each Muslim, whether he likes it or hates it, except if commanded to do an act of disobedience to God; hence, if someone is commanded to disobey God, there is no obedience to them or compliance with the order”*.⁽¹⁾

Q139: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning people who commit major sins, and what is the evidence which supports this position?

The ruling concerning the individual who commits a major sin, according to the position of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*, is that the person does not become a disbeliever due to the major sin which he/she has committed, nor will he/she be

⁽¹⁾ Collected by Al-Bukhari: 7144; and Muslim: 1839

made to spend eternity in Hell due to such an act. Such a person's destiny is in the Hands of God: He may issue a well-deserved punishment to the individual; yet, if He wills, He may just pardon him/her, as God, the Exalted, has said:

((إن الله لا يغفر أن يشرك به ويغفر ما دون ذلك لمن يشاء ومن يشرك بالله فقد افترى إثماً عظيماً)) [النساء: 48].

“Indeed God does not forgive anyone who dies worshipping other than God, but He forgives any other sin for whomever He wills” [The Qur'an, Chapter An-Nisa: 48]

Q140: What is the ruling concerning one who declares that a Muslim has become a disbeliever, and what is the proof?

Declaring that a Muslim is a disbeliever is an illegal act under Islamic law and the proof is the statement of the Prophet: *“Whosoever declares that a believing man or woman has disbelieved, it is as severe a crime as killing him/her.”*⁽¹⁾

Q141: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning the Companions of the Prophet?

The creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning the Companions of the Prophet is that their hearts are free from any feeling of rancor, hatred or enmity for the Companions of the Prophet; their tongues are never involved in disparaging or reviling them; they love them and always pray that God is pleased with them; they follow them in the best of manners; they pray for them with the supplication which God, the Exalted, has mentioned concerning them:

⁽¹⁾ Collected by Al-Bukhari: 6105

((ربنا أفر لنا وإخواننا الذين سبقونا بالإيمان)) [الحشر: 10].
“Our Lord! Please forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Hashr: 10]

Q142: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning *Aali Bait* (the close family) of the Messenger (peace and special blessings be upon him)?

The beliefs of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning the close family of the Messenger of God (peace and special blessings be upon him) is that they love them for two primary reasons: because they are believers, and due to the fact that they are relatives of the Messenger of God (peace and special blessings be upon him). However, they do not exaggerate in their reverence for them to the extreme that they worship them instead of worshipping God, or to the extent that they believe that they were infallible.

Q143: What is the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning *Al-Wala wal-Bara* (basing friendships and disassociations, from particular people and/or beliefs, on one’s commitment to God)?

The creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama’ah* concerning *Al-Wala wal-Bara*⁽¹⁾ is that it is an intricate part and necessary manifestation of faith; it is something which the very testimony of faith – *there is none worthy of worship except*

⁽¹⁾ TN: *Al-Wala wal-Bara*: is basing solidarity with people and disassociations -- from particular people and/or beliefs – on commitment to God and all that pleases Him. So, when a Muslim distances himself/herself from people who are obstinate upon disbelief in God -- and/or the places in which such obstinate disbelief and disregard for God occurs – these are examples of proper implementation of *Al-Wala wal-Bara*.

God – necessitates.

Al-Wala means: special and deep love for God, His Messenger, and for the believers.

Al-Bara means: holding firmly that the religions of those who disbelieve in Islam are all false and that they are on a doomed path on their false religions.

This involves: never supporting them in any of the falsehood in which they believe or with any of the wrong that they do; never emulating them with regards to habits which are specific to them and/or their religion. With that said, this position which a Muslim must hold does not allow that disbelievers (non-Muslims) be transgressed upon or wronged in any way, nor does it prevent that Muslims deal normally with them. On the contrary, Islam legally orders that those who disbelieve in Islam, yet are peaceful with Muslims, be treated well, and with great generosity.

Q144: What is the creed of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning Jesus (peace be upon him)?

The creed of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning Jesus (peace be upon him) is that Jesus is the slave of God, His Messenger; he is a slave not to be worshipped, and a Messenger who must not be rejected; he was a human being from the offspring of Adam (the first man), created from a mother with no father.

Q145: What is the position of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning other religions such as the religions of Jews and Christians? What evidence proves this position?

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah hold that the religion of Islam has abrogated all previous religions, and that God, the

Exalted, does not accept any religion other than Islam from anyone after His having sent Muhammad (peace and special blessings be upon him).

Q146: What is the evidence in the Beneficent Qur'an which proves that Islam is the true religion, and that all other religions are false?

The proof in the Beneficent Qur'an that Islam is the true religion, and that all other religions are false is the saying of God, the Exalted:

((ومن يبتغ غير الإسلام ديناً فلن يقبل منه وهو في الآخرة من الخاسرين)) [آل عمران: 85].

“And whosoever seeks to embrace a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him and in the Hereafter, he will be of the losers.”

[The Qur'an, Chapter Aali Imran: 85]

Q147: What is the evidence in the tradition of the Prophet which proves that belief in the Messenger, Muhammad, and the religion of Islam, which he came with, is obligatory?

The evidence in the tradition of the Prophet which proves that belief in the religion of Islam, which the Messenger Muhammad came with, is obligatory is his statement: “By He in whose Hand the soul of Muhammad is, there is no one from this age, be he Jew or Christian, who hears of me and dies without believing in that which I have been sent with except that he will be among the people of the Hellfire.”⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Collected by Muslim: 153

Q148: What is the position of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning the content of *The Book* (The Qur'an) and *The Sunnah* (The Collected Traditions of the Prophet, may peace and special blessings be upon him), and what is the proof for this position?

The position of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning the content of *The Book* (The Qur'an) and the *Sunnah* is to comply with *The Book* and the authentic *Sunnah*⁽¹⁾, and diligently abide by them; this also entails abstaining from opposing them with opinions or (so called) intellect. The proof of this is the statement of God, the Exalted:

((فلا وربك لا يؤمنون حتى يحكموك فيما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا في أنفسهم حرجاً مما قضيت ويسلموا تسليماً)) [النساء: 65].

“And know that, by God, they do not truly believe until they accept you as the judge in affairs concerning which they disagree, and until they find no discontent in themselves with your judgment but rather submit wholeheartedly.” [The Qur'an, Chapter An-Nisa: 65]

Q149: What is the position of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning *Jihad* (fighting) for the sake of God?

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah hold that (true and legislated) *Jihad*⁽²⁾ (fighting) is the pinnacle of Islamic strength. The

⁽¹⁾ TN: Excluding lies and fabricated narrations concerning the traditions and/or teachings of the Prophet.

⁽²⁾ TN: Jihad has nothing to do with the indiscriminate killing and terrorism some so-called Muslims claim to be their “jihad”. Jihad (legislated war) is only correct when in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and does not involve the waging of war by independent groups or individuals, harming innocent people, doing suicide bombings, etc.

purpose for its legislation is that the Word of God be held as the ultimate authority; however, there must be particular conditions met, and of the most important of them are: sufficient strength and capability, and that it is under a flag/banner waged by an official Muslim ruler (such as an official caliph, king or president)⁽¹⁾.

Q150: What is the position of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* concerning the acts of terrorist groups which they wrongfully call *Jihad*?

Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah openly and firmly condemn the actions of terrorists regardless of the fact that such terrorists call their acts jihad -- which is an outright fallacy. This is because they follow the methodology of the kharijites⁽²⁾, and due to the fact that their actions are pure evil and can effectively distort the image of Islam, frightening people who were otherwise safe, killing the innocent, those whose blood is sacred, causing great harm and destruction even in Muslim lands.

***True success is only granted to by God,
May peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad***

⁽¹⁾ TN: This excludes self-proclaimed leaders, cult heads, independent warriors and the likes.

⁽²⁾ TN: The Kharijites **الخواارج**: a deviant group, dating back to the first century of Islamic history, who were extremists and very harsh towards Muslims and others. Some scholars of Islam even hold that some of their transgressions are actions which abrogate their Islam – putting them outside of the fold of Islam.

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