

Usool Ath Thalatha

By Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله

Explained by Dr. Murtadha bin Baksh حفظه الله

Dars 2 – First Muqaddimah

In the previous lesson – four fundamental issues were discussed:

1. The knowledge of Aqeedah is sought from two sources only – the Quran and the authentic ahadith i.e. revelations only. There exists no other source for seeking this knowledge. Whatever is found to be proven from the Quran and hadith becomes a part of our religion, whatever does not occur in the Quran and hadith, then it cannot be a part of our religion.
2. Allaah had created mankind on an excellent natural predisposition (Fitrah) and this natural predisposition establishes an inherent belief in every human that there is a Creator who has created him. Man is inherently aware of his Lord, who is his Creator, Sustainer, the One who gives benefit and harm, the One who dispels difficulties and helps in times of need.
3. The first obligation upon a Mukallaf (a legally responsible individual in terms of Shariah – this include a mature person who has crossed the age of puberty with sound intellect. Included in this definition are mankind and jinn, excluded from it are those who have lost their sanity and those who have not crossed the age of puberty). The one with a sound intellect is the opposite of a mad person and the one who is mature is said to be the one who possesses these signs - 3 in males and 4 females.

Signs of the male pubertal milestone include:

- a. Beginning of seminal discharge
- b. Appearance of pubic hair
- c. Completion of 15 years of age

The signs of female pubertal growth include the three above with an additional fourth sign – beginning of the menstrual cycle. So the person who has crossed these pubertal growth milestones and is of sound intellect is said to be legally responsible in terms of Shariah (Mukallaf).

And the first obligation upon a Mukallaf is – Tawheed Al Ibadah. This is because awareness of Tawheed Ar Ruboobiyyah is inherently present within a human being from birth (as proven from the hadith of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ in the previous lesson that every child is born on Fitrah, then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian [Fire worshipper]).

Since Allaah is solely the Creator of this Universe and of mankind, and He is also the sole Sustainer and Lord, hence it is His sole right to be worshipped without associating any partners with Him in worship.

4. The fourth matter discussed in the previous lesson was that the purpose for which Allaah sent Messengers and Prophets (may peace and blessings be upon them all) was to spread the message of Tawheed Al Ibadah [as proven from the ayah 36 of Surah Nahl – kindly refer to the previous lesson's notes].

Imam Malik has defined the word Taghut as

طاغوت – كل من نعبد من دون الله

[Transliterated – KULLU MAN NU'BIDA MIN DOONILLAAH]

Anything which is worshipped other than Allaah.

These were the fundamental issues that were discussed in the previous lessons.

Review of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab's رحمه الله biography

He was born in the city of Uyaynah in the Arabian Peninsula (present day Saudi Arabia) in the year 1115 H. He belonged to a scholarly family and acquired elementary education from his father. He memorized the Noble Quran before crossing 10 years of age. He sought knowledge from scholars in his town, then travelled far and wide to seek knowledge; to Makkah, Madinah and the Levant. He began seeking knowledge while beginning with the basics i.e. Aqeedah and Tawheed along with other sciences like Fiqh etc. The reason for which he gave special emphasis on the knowledge of Aqeedah and Tawheed was that in his time, grave worshipping had become common. There were shrines and cemented graves in every place and people's hearts had become attached to the ones buried in these graves. Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab waged war and struggled against this false Aqeedah, he waged Jihad with his knowledge and even with the sword when the need arose. Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud, the chief of the town of Diriyah, observed sincerity in the call of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab and aided him in establishing his call. Due to their efforts, Allaah manifested His signs and gave victory to them (in a place where grave worshippers were in strength. Al Ahsa region, which was a strong kingdom at that time with their governors present everywhere, was full of polytheistic ideology. Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab was alone in lifting the banner of Tawheed and he set out in the path of Allah and went from town to town to spread his message. Some people would turn him away to preserve their power, some to preserve their life. But he had resolved to spread this call, which was the call of all the Messengers and Prophets. It was Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud who responded to his call and both the Imams worked collectively to spread the call to Tawheed. They waged war when needed and due to the Grace of Allaah and the efforts of these two Imams, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established on this call. One can observe that today there exists not a single shrine in the Kingdom and there is no trace of grave worshipping left.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab died in the year 1206 H.

Usool Ath Thalatha with its Evidences

Meaning of Usool – The word Usool is a plural of Asl (اصل) and it means the root of something.

For example,

اصل الشجرة means roots of a tree. So Usool is the foundation upon which something is built.

The foundation of our religion is Aqeedah and the knowledge of the basic issues of Aqeedah must be sought by every Muslim. These basic issues are called Usool and Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab has described 3 foundations in this text. These are those foundations upon which depends the state of the believer in this world and the hereafter and hence these foundations should be known by every Muslim. Without being aware of these foundations, a Muslim has no purpose of living in this world and he has no share of the good in the hereafter. Allaah created humans as the best of the creations. All existing things can be divided into 4 categories.

Categories of the Created Things

1. Jamaad – this includes all non-moving (stationary) non-living objects like glass, microphone etc.
2. Nabataat – this includes the plants. The plants contain the characteristics of Jamaadiyaat in that they are stationary but they have an additional characteristic i.e. growth and reproduction which signifies that they are living things
3. Haywaan – this includes the animal kingdom. The animals contain the characteristic of growth like the plants but they have two additional characteristic i.e. movement and presence of senses and organ systems
4. Insaan – this includes humans. Human beings possess the above mentioned characteristics of growth and reproduction, mobility, well developed organ systems and an additional

characteristic which is unique to them and that is intellect. This gives human beings the power to choose, to a free will. However, the will of human beings is subject to the Will of Allaah. They can neither exercise unchecked free will nor are they completely helpless to the Will of Allaah (without any will of their own). If Allaah had created humans as helpless beings without any choice or will of their own, then there would have been no purpose of creating Paradise and Hell. Rather, if a person is already doomed to be in Hellfire because he was willed to be so by the Will of Allaah and that person has no choice in this matter, then this is injustice and Allaah is far removed from being unjust. So it is not from the wisdom of Allaah, the Most Wise that He should have created humans as helpless and completely subjected to His Will and had to act under this Divine Will throughout their lives and ultimately some of them would be sent to the Hellfire (even though it was not their choice but the Will of Allaah – this entails injustice and hence this belief is false). So what is he being punished for?

The evidence that the will of human beings lies beneath and is subjected to the Will of Allaah lies in Surah Takweer, ayah 29

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And you will not, unless (it be) that Allah wills, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).

So this human, who is the best of all creation, has been granted with intellect and sound reasoning and the best use of this gift is to acquire knowledge of the matters of Aqeedah which will aid him in rectifying his affair in this world and the hereafter.

The three foundations that are described by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab are those regarding which a human being will be questioned in his grave i.e. Who is your Lord, Who is your

Prophet and What is your Religion? These are three easy questions and their answers are known by everyone. However, in the grave, a person's intellect will not suffice him. In this life, the actions of the tongue are linked with the brain and intellect, but in the grave, a person will not be able to avail of his intellect and his tongue will be linked to the heart and the beliefs it held firm upon (Eeman/Aqeedah) in his life. Hence, the tongue will act and respond in accordance to whatever is present in the heart in terms of Eeman. And Eeman cannot be rectified and strengthened except by seeking its knowledge. Therefore, it is imperative to seek knowledge of these 3 matters.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab has titled this work "The Three Foundations **with Their Evidences**". This shows the importance of evidence. As mentioned earlier, the knowledge of Aqeedah is baseless without evidences and the sources of our evidences are the Quran and authentic Prophetic Narrations.

EVIDENCES (DALEEL)

Meaning of Evidence - دليل

Daleel is anything that brings one closer towards that which one is seeking/intending. Daleel is also intended for a person who acts as guide to show the way. For example, when the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ intended to migrate to Madinah from Makkah, he wanted to take a route which was different from the normal road taken by wayfarers to Madinah in order to evade the polytheists of Makkah (who sought to harm him). In this situation, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ chose Abdullah ibn Uraiqib, a polytheist, as a guide to show them the new route.

Hence, linguistically, a guide is also called Daleel i.e. the one who guides you to your intended destination.

The legislative meaning of Daleel is to take assistance of the Quran and Hadith to arrive at a conclusion over a religious issue i.e. the path that becomes apparent to us after referring to the Quran and Hadith in a particular issue, is the daleel.

Importance of Daleel (Evidence)

It is extremely important for a Muslim to seek evidence for any matter in the religion. This is because the one who does not do so has three disadvantages:

1. He does not feel content
2. There is maximum risk of falling into error
3. By falling into the trap of Taqleed, he sinks lower and lower in this trap

Taqleed means **قبول قول الغير بلا دليل** i.e. to accept someone's statement without evidence. Hence

Daleel is very important in all matters of religion as it is the basis of our religion, however it is especially important in the matters of Aqeedah.

Types of Daleel

1. **ادلة السمعية** - this includes that which we hear i.e. Quran and Saheeh Ahadith
2. **ادلة العقلية** - this includes sound intellect

Ahlu sunnah wal jamaah give priority to **ادلة السمعية** over intellect. They use intellectual evidences only after proving their issue by presenting evidence from Quran and Sunnah. On the contrary, the philosophers and people of Rhetoric like the Jahmiyyah, Mutazilah, Ashairah and Maturidiyyah put intellect before the textual proofs. They say that intellectual proofs (instead of textual proofs) are the conclusive proofs.

In Surah Saad ayah 75 Allaah **سبحانه وتعالى** tells us that He created Adam **عليه السلام** with His two hands. Those who give preference to intellect reject this on the basis of similarity. They say that if one believes that Allaah has Hands, then it makes Him similar to the creation (due to logic) and hence they reject it altogether that Allaah has Hands even though it is proven from Quran and authentic Ahadith. So they claim that since similarity between the creation and Allaah amounts to disbelief, hence it is more prudent to reject it altogether. When asked regarding the fact that why do they consider that the Hands of Allaah are similar to the creation, they say that the intellect entails that all hands are similar, be it of the Creator or the Creation. They put intellect ahead of Quran and Hadith which is a dangerous thing. The Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah accept the proofs in the Quran regarding the Hands of Allaah but do not comment on the state (kayfiyyah) of His Hands, it is known to Allaah alone as He has informed us of the presence of His Hands but not the state. The question regarding the state and form of Allaah's Hands was not asked by either the Messenger of Allaah **ﷺ**, or his Companions, the Tabieen or the four major jurists of Islam or the Hadith scholars till date.

A very easy example is that humans and cats, both have hands but the hands of human beings are not similar to the paws of a cat. When such diversity exists within the creation itself, then what sort of intellect would compel a person to reason that believing in the Hands of Allaah would mean implying a similarity between Allaah and His creation.

Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab has included three introductions in this text. The three introductions are as follows:

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab starts his work with the Basmalah following the example in the Quran wherein every Surah begins with the Basmalah. Furthermore, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ began all his ﷺ with the Basmalah and Shaykh has tried to emulate this example.

Meaning of Basmalah – With Allaah’s name I begin, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. This is the common translation. Its detailed meaning is very beautiful and should be properly understood.

- The letter ب here contains two great benefits.

1. To seek help
2. To seek blessing

i.e. “O Allaah, I extol your name and seek help and blessings from it while doing this deed”.

This is an expansive explanation of the use and benefit of the letter ب.

Now **إسم الله** – this grammatical formulation is called **مفرد مضاف**. It means “added singular”.

Whenever this grammatical formulation occurs in the Arabic language, it denotes **عموم** i.e.

generality. **عموم** in this context indicates that this word includes all the Names of Allaah. So

this leads to the translation being “O Allaah, I seek help and blessings through all Your Blessed

Names”. No one is aware of the real count of Allaah’s Names. The ones proven from the Quran

and authentic Ahadith are 99 but there are more regarding which we are unaware.

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said

أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمِيَ بِهِ نَفْسِكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَ أَحَدًا بِخَلْقِكَ أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ

“I seek help from every Name of Yours, the one which You have named Yourself with, or revealed in Your Book, or taught it to any of Your creation or hidden it in the unseen knowledge that is with You”

So this means Allaah alone knows the total count of His names.

So the correct translation is “O Allaah, I seek help and blessings through all Your Blessed Names”.

- **الرحمن** – the One possessing general/wide/expansive mercy. He is the one with infinite mercy and favors and grace. This is one of the Names of Allaah and it is not permissible to use it for the creation. It so happens that those who are named Abdur Rahman, are usually called just Rahman while omitting the Abd in the name and this is impermissible. Similar is the case with Abdus Samad. All these names are to be called in full.

Ar Rahman is **صيغة المبالغة** which indicates excess, beyond limits. So wide is His mercy that He bestows it upon the disbelievers as well. This type of mercy extends to all creations of Allaah. People commit disbelief, reject the presence of Allaah etc. but Allaah provides them with sustenance, health and prosperity in lieu of His general Mercy.

- **الرحيم** – the One who bestows mercy. It is not that Mercy is just an attribute for Him, rather this mercy reaches all his creations. **الرحمان** is the **صفت** and **الرحيم** is the **فعل**. It is that mercy which is specific to the believers.

Meaning – O Allaah, I ask for help and seek blessings from all Your Blessed Names so that You make that which I am about to begin, easy for me and grant me the ability to finish this work in the best manner and put blessings in it for me. You are Most Beneficent, Your mercy is so expansive that You bestow Your mercy to animals and disbelievers as well. I am one of your weak slaves who is dependent on Your mercy, extend Your mercy on me and make this work easy for me and bless it for me.

Note: It is an innovated practice to write the numbers 786 in place of Basmalah and this is not permissible. Had it been permissible, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ would have definitely used these numbers to replace Basmalah especially in his ﷺ letters. However, he ﷺ always began his letters with the Basmalah even though his letters were addressed to the disbelievers like Caesar, Kisra (Chosroe - the Persian Emperor) and Nagashi and carried the risk of being abused. The Persian Emperor had even torn the letter and threw it on the ground, yet this did not deter the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ in writing the Basmalah in his letters.

This is an evidence for those people who claim that writing the numerals 786 is better than writing Basmalah as the paper or medium on which it is written may be subjected to disrespect and abuse (by people stepping on it, or it being thrown into the trash). This claim is baseless and this action has no precedence by the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ who was more pious than us all.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab states:

اعلم رحمك الله

“Know, May Allaah have mercy on you”

This is a standard way of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, may Allaah have mercy on him, that he began most of his texts with this supplication. The Shaykh before beginning the content of this book, intends this supplication for the person reading this book or listening to it and supplicates to Allaah to have mercy on him. The words **اعلم رحمك الله** here are intended as a supplication to Allaah to forgive your previous sins, to prevent you from committing future sins and to grant you the ability to perform righteous deeds.

أنه يجب علينا تعلم أربع مسائل

“that it is obligatory upon us to learn four matters”

As described earlier, this text contains three introductions, then it describes the three foundations and it ends with a conclusions. Each of the introductions describes some important matters. In this introduction, four important matters are described. These are, as stated by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab

الأولى: العلم وهو: معرفة الله ومعرفة نبيه ومعرفة دين الإسلام بالأدلة

The First: Knowledge – and it is knowledge and awareness of Allaah, knowledge of His Prophet and knowledge of the religion of Islam with the evidences

This entails seeking knowledge regarding Allaah, His purpose of creating us, His Names and Attributes etc. Unless a human is aware of his Creator and his Lord, he will not be able to be truly grateful for His bounties.

The next matter is to be aware of the Prophet of Allaah, where he came from, what was his message, who was he sent to and what he left behind in this world, the biography of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ. The last matter is to seek knowledge about the religion of Islam with evidences.

Now each of these matters will be described in detail. There are different levels of knowledge. And these are:

1. إدراك شي علي ما هو عليه ادراك جازما - علم - to recognize/know something like it truly is. This is the best level related to knowledge, it is to know something as it exists with conviction. For example, to know that the object placed in front of you is a pen, and to know it with conviction while it is indeed a pen.
2. عدم الادراك بكلية - جهل البسيط - complete absence of recognition/knowledge - in the above example, if we ask someone what the object is and he replies with “ I don’t know” , then this is called Jahl Al Baseet.
3. شك - this is the level between ilm and jahl al baseet. The reaction of such a person to the above example of a pen is that he will say “I suspect that this object is a pen”. It is easy to dispel his doubt by asserting to him that the object is a pen.
4. ظن - this is a state of suspicion wherein a person suspects a thing to be different than what it is but he is a moderate state of suspicion with no inclination to either the right or wrong side. If we take the example of a pen, then a person with Zhan will say regarding it “I suspect this object is a pair of glasses but it may be a pen”. In this example, the person suspects the object to be other than what it really is but he is not forming any conviction of what it really is

5. **وهم** — in this case, a person suspects a thing to be different than what it truly is, and his suspicion tends to form a conviction in him towards the opposite of what is true. In the example of pen, a person with Wahm will say “I suspect this object to be glasses and these maybe glasses”.
6. **جهل المركب** – to believe in the exact opposite of the reality/truth. In the above example, if a person is asked about the same object and he replies that it is a pair of glasses while in fact it is a pen, then this is called Jahl Al Murakkab. This is the most difficult stage by which a person can be afflicted because for such a person, one has two daunting tasks to fulfil. First, to dispel his conviction regarding that thing (for example that this not a pair of glasses) and second, to convince him of the reality (in this case, to convince him that this object is indeed a pen).

The problem with our Ummah is that it is widely afflicted by Jahl Al Murakkab. Due to this reason, the scholars have to perform two tasks; the first being the task of dispelling the false creeds that are widespread among people and the second one being the task of explaining the right creed to the people.

For example, when a layman is asked the question – Where is Allaah and he replies with “I do not know”, then this is Jahl Al Baseet and it easy to prove to such a person that Allaah is above His Throne. However, when a layman believes Allaah is everywhere, then this is Jahl Al Murakkab. The first matter that needs to be proven to such a person is that Allaah is not everywhere with evidences, and the second matter to be proven is that He is above His Throne with evidences.

Types of Knowledge

Ilm is of two kinds :-

1. **علم ضروري** - this type of ilm is present in the innate consciousness of a human being and does not require any seeking. For example, the knowledge that fire can burn and a baby's

suckling reflex. Due to this knowledge, a human has innate awareness of Tawheed Ar Ruboobiyah, that Allaah is his Creator and Lord. Problem is that people need to be taught this innate knowledge as well, that Allaah is the the One Who dispels troubles, the One Who provides relief etc. People have changed their innate disposition itself.

2. علم نصري - any ilm that is sought from external sources. For example, to learn the manner of performing Wudhu, Salah, Hajj etc.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله states that,

وهو معرفة الله - it is not enough to just know Allaah, rather the intent of knowing Allaah is to submit to Him completely after attaining knowledge of His greatness. To obey Him in all matters.

Knowledge of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ

The intent of knowledge of the Messenger of Allaah صلي الله عليه

وسلم is to know him in such a manner as to obey him, follow his rules and prohibitions. He ﷺ is the final Prophet and Messenger and no prophet or messenger will be sent after him. His ﷺ teachings will be preserved till the Day of Judgment and adhering to his ﷺ teachings is our religion and the only way to rectify our life in this world and to achieve goodness in the hereafter.

To have knowledge of the religion of Islam with evidences

This is to have knowledge of the Deen of Islam with evidences in all its matters. For example, to offer Salah in because it is proven to be a pillar of Islam with evidences and to abstain from celebrating Mawlid because such an act is not proven to be a part of the religion by any evidence.

Benefits of Evidence:

1. The one who has evidence is content, whereas the one who does not have evidence is forever in doubt.

2. One who does not have evidence is always trapped in the following four things -

- i. He worships Allaah in a way that he believes what he is following is the truth even though it may be the complete opposite of truth. So he will be performing fruitless actions for which he will not be rewarded and he will die upon these false beliefs
- ii. He fights against the truth because he believes that his own false beliefs are the truth whereas in fact those beliefs are baatil
- iii. He defends the baatil
- iv. He leaves off some obligatory parts of the Deen. For example, lot of people do not give Zakah even though they celebrate Mawlid and Rajab. This is because he does not want to seek knowledge of the religion

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله further states:

الثانية - العمل به

To act upon that knowledge. Actions / deeds are fruits of knowledge. Knowledge is the seed and actions are its fruits. The one who sows a seed and does not reap the fruits, his fruits will rot away and he will be considered a madman to have wasted them after working hard for it. The real fruit of knowledge is deeds in accordance with that knowledge. It is to be noted that deeds are futile without knowledge as is knowledge futile without following it up with deeds.

In this context Allaah سبحانه وتعالى has described three groups in Surah Al Fatihah. Two are upon falsehood and one group is upon the truth. These are:

1. صراط الذين انعمت عليهم – the path of those to whom You have bestowed Your Grace
2. غير المغضوب عليهم – not of those upon whom descended Your Anger
3. ولا الضالين – nor those who went astray

- The first group comprises of those people who sought ilm and acted upon that ilm (العمل به).
This is the best group and they are the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah
- The second group are those upon whom Allaah descended His Anger and punishment (Jews)
They had ilm but they did not ACT upon it. (لا عمل به)
- The third group comprises those who were misguided, they acted without knowledge (العمل
بغير علم). These are the Christians.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله further says:

الثالثة : الدعوة اليه

I.e. calling towards that knowledge. This is dawah and propagation.

Dawah is also an act of worship just like performing Salah and giving Zakah is. Every act of worship has its foundations, pillars and conditions without which that particular act of worship is not acceptable; it is either rejected altogether or the reward for that deed is reduced. Dawah and propagation also has its own conditions and obligations. Two important matters must be solidified before taking up the task of Dawah, these include:

1. Knowledge
2. Acting upon that knowledge

Dawah is useless without knowledge and deeds. Evidence for this is the statement of Allaah سبحانه

وتعالى Surah Yusuf Ayah 108

قل هذه سبيلي أدعو إلى الله علي بصيرة انا و من اتبعني و سبحان الله و ما انا من المشركين

Say (O Muhammad SAW): "This is my way; I invite unto Allah (i.e. to the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allah i.e. to the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) with sure knowledge. And Glorified and Exalted be Allah (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the Mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah; those who worship others along with Allah or set up rivals or partners to Allah)."

From this ayah, it is established that the way of the Messenger of Allaah in Dawah is:

1. ادعو الي الله – to call towards Tawheed before anything else and to refrain from calling towards any group or towards oneself. A person's lessons and the foundations of his call should be Tawheed
2. علي بصيرة – to call with sure knowledge like the light of the sun during the daytime. The knowledge of Tawheed should be clear
3. انا و من اتبعني – the one calling and the ones following him must all be upon the same path

Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله further states:

الرابعة : الصبر علي الأذي فيه

I.e. to be patient upon whatever obstacles or hardships are encountered in the way of Dawah and propagation. This is because the path of Tawheed is not easy, it is full of hardship. Satan will present himself before you in the form of obstacles at various points in your path. The devils from among the humans will also join forces to create hurdles in this path to stop a person from spreading the call to Tawheed by inflicting physical and psychological harm. But one should have patience. Patience is the foundation of everything, including knowledge.

The people of old would travel for two months in quest of a single hadith. Acts of worship like Zuhr Salah in hot weather also require patience and similarly Dawah also requires patience.

Types of Sabr (patience)

Sabr - حبس النفس i.e. to stop the soul. There are three types of Sabr and these include:

1. To exercise patience while performing the obligations that are prescribed by Allaah. To exercise patience while refraining from the prohibitions described by Allaah
2. To exercise patience upon the destiny written by Allaah (the difficulties and grief encountered by a person)

Most of the people are only aware of the last type of patience i.e. to be patient when any calamity befalls them in lieu of their destiny. They are ignorant of the first two types of patience. For example, when a person wakes up for Fajr despite deep sleep, then this is patience. Furthermore, performing ablution with cold water in a cold weather is an example of patience while fulfilling the obligations set by Allaah.

Another example of patience is when the sight of a person does not rest upon any haram scene (a non mahram, an obscene picture etc.) and when a person prevents himself to listening to prohibited things (like music, backbiting etc). This is the second type of patience.

An example of the third type of patience is when people are afflicted with a calamity and they say – Verily, to Allaah we belong and to Him is our return.

Real patience is a combination of these three types of patience. A person maybe quite patient in worldly matters but if he does remain patient in fulfilling the obligations of Allaah (does not pay Zakah, is not obedient to parents, does not pray Salah etc.), then he did not exercise complete patience. Furthermore, a person who does not remain patient in staying away from the prohibitions even after fulfilling the obligations like Salah, Zakah etc. (i.e. the person smokes, commits fornication or deals in usury), then he too did not exercise complete patience.

Patience is a mercy to us from Allaah without which living life would be impossible. One cannot imagine how life would have been if Allaah had not created patience in us.

Evidence for the four matters described above

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله described the above four matters and claimed that these four matters are those the knowledge of which is obligatory upon every Muslim. He has substantiated this claim with evidence as is his norm; if one picks up any of his books, one will observe that every statement of the Shaykh will be followed by a reference from the Quran or Hadith. He stated:

و دليله قول تعالى

And its evidence is the statement of Allaah, the Most High,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allaah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

وَالْعَصْرِ

By the time

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ

Verily! Man is in loss

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالحَقِّ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالصَّبْرِ

Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad, etc.).

Surah Al Asr

This is a small surah which most of us recite during our prayers. Have we ever pondered upon its meanings and what message it contains? This small surah contains all these immense and beautiful benefits.

Summarized Explanation of the Surah

- When the letter **و** is found before a noun in the Arabic language, then it is called **حرف القسم** (harf al qasam). This denotes an oath. Examples include **والليل ، و الفجر ، و** etc. The identification of a noun in the Arabic language is the occurrence of the definite article **ال** as a prefix. If the letter **و** precedes a noun, then it denotes an oath. In this ayah, Allaah has sworn by the time. It is appropriate for Allaah to swear by any of His creation as He is the Creator and the Owner. However, it is not permissible for the creation to swear by anyone or anything other than Allaah.

Allaah's Messenger ﷺ stated in a hadith (the meaning of which is) that whoever wants to take up an oath, then he should either swear by Allaah or remain silent. In another narration, Allaah's Messenger ﷺ stated (the meaning of which is) that whoever swears by other than Allaah has committed Kufr/Shirk.

Once Abdullah ibn Omar رضي الله عنهما encountered a person looking towards the Ka'bah and taking an oath by saying "by the Ka'bah". He corrected him and directed him to say "by the Lord of the Ka'bah" instead, at the same time prohibiting the man to swear by the Ka'bah because it has been prohibited by the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ. Then he narrated the statement that whoever swears by other than Allaah has committed Kufr/Shirk.

Hence, it is impermissible for the creation to swear by anything other than Allaah like by any prophet, saint, angel, by the son etc. This is a form of Shirk.

The reason for this act to be included in Shirk is that a person swears by that which he holds in very high esteem and status be it a prophet, a saint, an angel or a family member. This implies that a person has given these created beings such an elevated status in his heart that he occupies the same rank as Allaah. For example, some people are not sufficed when someone swears by Allaah and they do not accept it but when the person swears by Ghaus, they accept it readily. This implies that Ghaus occupies an equal or even greater rank than Allaah in those people's hearts. Their argument is that Allaah is Most Merciful and He will forgive the one lying while swearing upon Him but Ghaus is not merciful and he will not forgive.

- Why did Allaah swear by the time? This is because this time contains an amalgamation of good and evil, belief and disbelief, Tawheed and Shirk. So He swore upon everything contained within time.

Time is divided into three categories:

- I. Past
- II. Present
- III. Future

So Allaah has sworn upon all these categories of time to inform us that He has dealt with these matters (to be described in the coming ayah) in the same way in all these categories of time. Those people who have not acted upon these matters in the past, those who do not do so in the present and those who will not act upon them in the future, all of them will be in loss and will be doomed. This is the wisdom behind swearing upon time, and Allaah knows best.

- ان – Verily
- الانسان – every man, all of mankind. Whether it be small or big, rich or poor, the ruler or the ruled, this includes the entire human race (those excluding jamaad, nabaat, haywaan and angels)

- ل – used for emphasis
- فِي خَسْرٍ – to indicate the encompassing nature of the loss which is upon humans i.e. humans are drowned in loss
- إِلَّا – except (those that have these characteristics). These are the characteristics which form the evidences for the four matters described by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab

1. الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا – those who believed. Eeman entails believing in everything that Allaah has ordered us with i.e. belief in Allaah, His angels, His books, His Messengers, the hereafter and belief in destiny. These are the pillars of Eeman. These are followed by the pillars of Islam. These are followed by all those matters that are obligated upon a person to learn, without the knowledge of which a person will be unable to succeed in this life and the next. Eeman is not possible without knowledge; in fact Eeman is knowledge.

2. وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ – after acquiring knowledge of Eeman, it is also important to follow it up with righteous deeds. It is not enough for the one who wants to prevent himself loss to acquire knowledge alone and then claim to be a believer. It must be accompanied by righteous actions. All actions are not considered righteous; there are two conditions which must be simultaneously fulfilled for actions to be acceptable as righteous actions. These are:

- Sincerity for the sake of Allaah alone
- Following the example of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ in all acts of worship

An example of an unacceptable action is that a person prays 3 rakaat in the Fajr Salah (instead of the prescribed 2) and changes the qiblah, then such a salah is not acceptable even though the person may have prayed with sincerity in intention. This is because both conditions were not simultaneously fulfilled. The person did not

follow the example of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and hence the deed is not acceptable. The example for this lies in the incident mentioned in Sahih Bukhari wherein the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ asks a man to repeat his prayer three times (because he did not pray it correctly each time). After the third time, the man came to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and said to him “by The One who sent you with the truth, I cannot pray better than this so teach me how to pray”. Then the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ taught him the correct method of prayer. The mistake which the man made was not praying in the manner of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ even though he had sincerity in intention and was facing the qiblah.

3. **وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ** – to advise each other with goodness and truth. This is Dawah and propagation
4. **وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ** – to advise each other with patience. This is because patience is the basis of all the other three i.e. knowledge, deeds and dawah. The one giving dawah must also be prepared to receive it but foremost comes ilm, then actions/deeds and the next step is dawah. And patience accompanies all three.

There are some sects present in our times which do not lay any emphasis on knowledge of fundamentals, rather they tread out on the path of Dawah without knowledge. They only give importance to acts of worship like the issues pertaining to Salah, fasting, hajj etc. but they do not lay any emphasis on Tawheed or Aqeedah and claim that these issues are only for the scholars whereas the layman should only be dealing with the merits of these issues i.e. the merits of Salah, the merits of Tawheed etc. The fundamental issues related to Tawheed are not stressed upon by these groups. This is a baseless thing to do because merely knowing the merits of a certain act of worship will not compel a person to perform that act of worship unless the fundamental issues are firmly rooted within the heart. The merits of an act of worship are only beneficial for a person

when he knows about the fundamentals of that act. For example, the merits of Salah are only beneficial for such a person who knows the correct method of performing Salah. Similarly, a person who does not pray will not be benefited by merely gaining knowledge of the merits of Aqeedah.

Lastly, patience should be exercised in all matters. At this point, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله has expounded on two additional matters.

- قال شافعي رحمه الله : لو ما انزل الله حجة علي خلقه الا هذه سورة لك فتح

- Imam Shafiee (he is Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris Ash Shafiee, died in 204 H, may Allaah have mercy upon him) said: If Allaah had not revealed as proof (anything else but) this Surah upon His creation, it would have been sufficient". This is because this surah contains all those issues which are important for a muslim i.e. the matters of Eeman, deeds and actions, dawah and patience.

The reason why it is important to mention the date of death of scholars is that this has been the way of the hadith scholars. When the date of death of a muhaddith is known, it is easy to determine the following

1. whether the scholar was from the best three generations or not
2. who were the contemporary scholars of his time
3. what trials occurred during his time
4. it helps to verify the chain of narration

Imam Shafiee is the one to whom the Shafiee school of thought is attributed. However, it must be noted that none of the four jurists formulated the schools of thought during their lifetimes, rather it was their students or later scholars who did so. Furthermore, none of the four imams ordered the people to blindly follow them in any manner without proof. In fact they would prohibit a person from Taqleed Shaqsi

(blind following of a person without proof). People would go them for religious verdicts, and they would search for the matter in the Quran and the hadith. If they did not find the solution in it, they would look for the statements of the companions and their successors. If the solution was still not found, they would do their own ijtihaad. However, they never claimed that their ijtihaad is binding even after proof is found in the hadith. The statement of Imam Abu Haneefah is quite famous wherein he says that if my statement goes in opposition to the Hadith of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, then throw my statement against the wall.

Then Shaykh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab رحمه الله further states:

- و قال البخاري رحمه الله : باب - العلم قبل القول و العمل و دليله قول تعالى - فعلم انه لا إله إلا

الله واستغفر لذنبك، فبدأ با العلم قبل القول والعمل

- Imam Bukhari states (He is Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Ismaeel Al Bukhari, died in 256 H, may Allaah have mercy upon him. Imam Ibn Hajr Al Asqalani said regarding him – he is trustworthy, an Imam, a mountain in terms of memorization) – he formulated a chapter called “Knowledge precedes statements and actions and the evidence for this lies in the statement of Allaah – Know that indeed there is no deity (worthy of worship in truth) except Allaah and seek forgiveness for your sins” and he began with knowledge before statements and action.